



THE TIVVY BUZZETTE

The Newsletter of Tiverton Beekeepers – Special Extra Edition – October 2019

Tiverton Beekeepers are a branch of the Devon Beekeepers Association Registered Charity No 270675

What Events Are Coming Up?

Weds 20th Nov – Our AGM followed by
“A Demonstration of How to Make
Beeswax Wraps with Norma King.
7.30 pm at Uplowman Village Hall

Sat 14th Dec – DBKA AGM
10.15am at Quince Honey Farm
More details on DBKA website

As I write this the “outside” bee season is coming to a close. The bees are hopefully well fed with plenty of stores; varroa free and are ready to face the challenge of winter!

As a club we are also facing challenges as winter comes along. This is the time for us to come together and make sure we are prepared for the new season after the new committee is elected.

“That which is not good for the bee-hive cannot be good for the bees.”

Marcus Aurelius

'WHAT ON EARTH IS GOING ON?' I hear being voiced by our members of the club.

Well let me try and explain.

What your current committee team have been doing in the past few weeks is to prepare a working proposal for the way forward, which would give the new elected committee a platform to work from and to move the club forward for the benefit of all its members.

**There are no commercial bee keepers in the club (so far), therefore it is a HOBBY for all of us! This is defined specifically as
“An activity pursued in one’s spare time for pleasure or relaxation”**

We are now in a position where we need to review the way we manage the apiary. So many great things have already taken place but due to several members of the apiary team standing down this is now an opportune moment to think about how we as a club get the best from this valuable resource.

Part of the reason we are a charity is because we provide education and training about beekeeping, and it is the general view that this should be the primary purpose of the apiary.

We should be able to offer a positive experience to those handling bees for the first time, along with teaching the basic of hive management for beginners demonstrating BBKA best practice.

We also propose to demonstrate more advanced hive management techniques for the more experienced members, such as swarm control, disease control and queen rearing to name a few.

We want to create a place where members can share experiences and learn from each other, and we propose to inform the members of “what’s on and when” by creating a yearly calendar of Club and National events. These will be found on the website and in the Buzzette.

The primary reason for the apiary should not be to generate income but naturally this is a useful bi-product as healthy happy bees produce honey! The sales of honey in recent years has generated substantial funds for the club and has been important in keeping the apiary self sufficient, so we probably do not need to generate much cash. However, if required, we can still rely on sale of surplus honey and sale of bees. Any money generated from honey sales is used to maintain the apiary and could be used to help subsidise courses for members?

We propose that the right number of hives for the apiary would be between 10 and 12. It is also suggested that bee colonies/swarms would be offered for sale to beginners and other members at a discount to market prices.

We are all volunteers and helping at the apiary should be a pleasurable experience.

Any thoughts from members would be much appreciated as without ideas and contributions it proves difficult to move forward and keep membership interesting and worthwhile!

Most jobs in the club take as little as 20 mins a month, so it doesn’t take much time if many people offer to help so don’t be shy – join in

By Malcolm Crook

The “Dreaded” AGM!



Our AGM is looming on Wednesday November 20th at 7.30pm. **“A date to avoid”** I hear you thinking but this year more than ever the club needs your support so **PLEASE** rethink your decision to stay away and put the date in your diary and come along. Even if these meetings are a little tedious there

is always good banter, hot drinks, and cake/biscuits to see you through the business end and then there is usually something more entertaining for the second half of the evening!

We need fresh ideas, new energy and more passion to encourage your **newly elected** committee to make Tiverton beekeepers club work for all its members. So please think carefully about the skills you have and be part of the action as we move forward to a new future in the year 2019-20.

These will be the vacant positions:

Chair/Vice Chair: We need someone who is confident at addressing meetings and can lead committee meetings. Although we all think that the chair of a committee should be an experienced bee-keeper this is not necessarily the case. This person just needs charisma, organisational skills and the ability to bring business to a close and not let us all whittle on too long in meetings! They need to be a figurehead for the branch and able to delegate jobs to the rest of us so that the job doesn't become onerous. The chair would work closely with the vice chair to provide direction for the club and the rest of the committee would be extremely supportive to anyone who would be willing to take up this role. The vice chair would be expected to support the chair and step up to the job when the chair resigns or is unavailable (we are hoping Malcolm Crook will continue in one of these roles at the AGM)

Treasurer/Membership secretary: You don't have to be an accountant or a book-keeper to take on this important role but you do have to be reasonably good with figures and spreadsheets! The new person taking on this role would have plenty of support so don't be scared to come forward. The new membership system has now been set up and I have been told this makes life easier to process new members as they come in as it just updating the database now. You would be responsible for giving figures at meetings so the committee knows how the finances of the club stand and a report for the AGM.

Programme Secretary: This person needs to liaise with members to find out what they want to learn and then book in speakers for our winter programme. They would also need to be willing to organise the Christmas get together and possibly put together a programme of summer events for members at the apiary. There is help available to find speakers so again this job isn't too difficult and not too time consuming either once the speakers have been found – the position will be what you have time to organise! They would also be asked to submit an upto date diary of events to the editor of the DBKA magazine once a month when they ask for it.

Webmaster: The new website has now been set up but our current webmaster is looking for someone to take over the role. This would involve keeping it upto date with news which will be emailed to them via the committee as things come in. You would have to make sure that it is functional and secure. Again support would be available to you as you take up the role and would be ongoing.

AHAT coordinator: The threat of the Asian hornet is constantly getting closer and we need someone to step up and help get us ready for the invasion! The role would involve making the club and the wider public aware of the possible problems and would involve going to some meetings with other AHAT groups in the county; collecting information and allowing us as a branch to be prepared for any sightings.

Display Team leader: We at Tiverton are proud of our ongoing record for providing displays at the various shows across the county. We need someone to lead a team of members to create next year's display – our outgoing Team Leader has now run out of ideas! You would be leading a group

of members to formulate the display and hopefully be able to get to the shows themselves to discuss the creation with members of the public. We have always found that these displays bring in new members to our club so are well worth doing each year. These are fun sessions which can be held at your home or somewhere more public – that would be upto you to organise.

Apiary Team Leader/Manager: As a committee we are working to finalise a job description for this role but the main task will be to oversee the apiary and it's subteam! To work closely with the education secretary and programme secretary; to sort out dates when the apiary will be open to members and to make sure the bees are well looked after. They will also be responsible for making sure the apiary rules and regulations are adhered to and for organising other members to help keep the apiary tidy. They will also liaise with the National Trust and the DBKA to make sure license agreements are upto date and that our relationship at Knightshayes progresses well into the future. They will be able to delegate jobs to other apiary team members and report back to the committee.

Apiary team members: We are sadly lacking in members who can spare time to go to the branch apiary. It would be great if we could get some new volunteers who could work with the Apiary Team Leader to make sure that members who visit the apiary have a good experience and want to come back and help themselves! This year we are looking at making some changes to make the apiary more accessible at different times and days instead of just Sunday mornings but we need people to help make this happen.

EC Delegate/DBKA trustee: This needs someone who is willing to attend the county meetings and vote on behalf of the branch at these events. They would have to report back to the branch on county matters and lead these discussions. The meetings are held every other month (I think!)

Swarm coordinator: Really what it says on the tin! We need someone who is a point of contact for collecting swarms in our area. There are a number of volunteers who are happy to collect swarms during the season but as calls come in from the public this person would delegate members to collect them and bring them to the "swarm" apiary.

Press officer: We need someone who is willing to send press releases to the local papers when the club are holding events or participating in local events.

Buzzette Editor: This person is just responsible for getting out the newsletter each month to members and circulating any extra emails which need to get out to members more quickly. The format of the newsletter is up to you and the deadline you require stuff to be submitted by but all members of the club can submit articles and photos for you to put in the newsletter at your discretion.

AS YOU CAN SEE THERE ARE LOTS OF JOBS AVAILABLE – THE MORE PEOPLE WHO VOLUNTEER SOME OF THEIR TIME THE EASIER IT IS FOR EVERYBODY – SO PLEASE THINK CAREFULLY ABOUT WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO BECOME INVOLVED IN AND THEN DO IT! Remember without a committee our club will cease to exist which would be very sad indeed.

IT MAY BE THAT NOT ALL THESE ROLES WOULD MEAN YOU HAVE TO JOIN THE COMMITTEE – Our current Webmaster and Buzzette editor come to the occasional meeting but mainly work from home in their own time.

Committee meetings are held at the pub at Uplowman every other month and normally last 1-2 hours! Some stay for a few drinks afterwards to catch up on other news – how involved you are is totally up to you. It would be expected that new committee members would take up their roles until at least the next AGM unless there are special mitigating circumstances.

By Jess Lee