

TWICKENHAM & THAMES VALLEY BEEKEEPING COMMITTEE MEETING
NO: 729

WEDNESDAY 20TH AUGUST 2025 at 7.30pm

Miller Hall, Whitton Road, Twickenham

MINUTES

Present:

Greg Elliott (GE); Ray Nicol (RN); Warwick Francis (WF); Patrick Brennan (PB); Jane Sachdev (JS); Christine Betley (CB); Sally Ewen (SE); Candy Williamson (CA); Mandy Moss (MM); Julie Hill (JH); Harvey Kirk (HK).

Apologies: Alex Lawrence; Phil Webb; Irek Gajowniczek.

1. MINUTES AND OUTSTANDING AISSUES FROM LAST MEETING 728 (9.7.25)

The Minutes were agreed as a true record.

- Consideration to be given on heat/dehumidifier for HPR.
- Ted Chattley cup. WF has found one that is a possibility. WF to circulate image to Committee.

ACTION: WF

- Open Day – MM had a couple of options for a new banner.

ACTION: MM to order.

- Update on Basic exams and Honey Bee Health exams.
RN gave an update.

2. SUB COMMITTEE REPORTS

SUB COMMITTEE REPORTS FOR COMMITTEE MEETING 729

Jane

Education Group

- Review meeting held on 23rd July – notes circulated to Committee along with a summary of how many visits, age groups etc.
- Hives 3, 4 and 4A being managed for the rest of the season by Jo Moore and Karen Mann. Thanks to them.
- An adult visit to the apiary from the local Age UK group took place on 30th July, led by Gia Pendred, supported by Christine B, Neil C, Jane S, Jo M and was much appreciated. 20 adults attended.

It was agreed JS will write an article for BBKA Newsletter about the Education Group and acknowledging the hard work the Sylvestor's had done. MM to interview the Sylvestor's.

ACTION: JS & MM

Mole Users

- We may offer a honey sale and Open Afternoon at Mole on 7th September. Details to be confirmed.
- Varroa treatment – Apiguard has been applied to the hives this year

Harvey

Shop Trading Centre

We started the year with a bank balance brought forward £4449.09

To date restocking amounts to £4062.95

Currently we have two accounts open CAF 2 showing £1895.13 and SUMUP £4909.51

Caf 2 Account charge £5.00 a month I would suggest closing this account as it is no longer required

We are in the process of trialling a new POS system to replace Easify which we hope to be on line next year

Stock levels are currently not correct in either POS system as these are not synchronised so unable to give accurate sales and profit margins until new Stock take at the end of the year

Jars are rapidly depleting due to low profit margins Also need to consider bulk purchase for next year. For debate “Future of the Equipment Centre “ A review of what we sell should take place. Main sales are National frames and foundation.

Agreed - Cap 2 account for the shop to be closed, leaving just the Sum Up.

It was agreed that a questionnaire be sent to members to ask where they buy their beekeeping equipment to start to gauge demand for the shop.

ACTION: MM

The shop will be closed on Friday 29th August.

Greg

Policies and Procedures

- A list of policies is in a hard copy file for viewing at the meeting if you wish. I have written some with the help of CHATGP so all comments welcome. We will need these to complete the CIO project and the list of outstanding documents is in the hard copy file. Any help from subcommittee members appreciated. MM to check the Chat GP for compliance. Once approved the documents will be available on the Website.
- MM, RN and MM have completed the documents for the CIO.

Maintenance/Building/General Management

- There are some remaining items for discussion at Meeting 729 but the bulk of all expense, maintenance and apiary improvements are complete (I think). These are:
- Plumbing alongside of Miller Hall – A big thanks to Alex as we now have a system that works there and a mains stopcock in the ground that does not leak. There is a swan necked tap to go in to enable easy filling of watering cans etc. Fire hose - a new nozzle is on the retained old hose with increased pipe diameter so better water

supply. Drainage - Alex and I never want to look down the sewers again!! and a TV survey showed we may have a tree root problem but in the short term this is all fixed – a 5m of drain may need re-lining in the future. Rainwater from the Miller Hall roof has been rerouted to the front soak away. The large water butt will be moved and plumbed into the other back quarter of Miller Hall roof drainage and it can then be used for watering (future project).

- The Front gate pillar requires the bricks to be reset and the guttering is still to be cleaned out. The Gazebos will be a great apiary asset so thanks for support to purchase those. Sorting out the Discovery Room and files is the next over the winter project.

Ray

Apiary management:

Varroa treatments applied (Basic group to be applied this Friday)

Feeding some of the colonies is ongoing. NBU put out a notice to feed you bees as they have come across multiple instances of colonies starving.

Aiming to assess our colonies further and feed, particularly in September. As the season seems to be three weeks to a month ahead of normal, this may extend the length of Winter. We should therefore make sure our colonies have in excess of 20kg (25kg?) recommended for a regular winter.

Aim to do the frame cleaning and wax rendering in eg November, when the bees should be tucked up for Winter and so reluctant to investigate the wax renderer and frame cleaner.

IT Infrastructure:

Looking at extending the software we use to loan out apiary equipment. The Committee gave us the go ahead to do this many years ago but we'll revisit the topic at the committee meeting.

Further development of the IT infrastructure will go on in the off season.

Adult Education:

Irek and Ben are progressing with the Basic Assessments. Two tranches, one has already taken place on the 14th, the next to take place on the 21st.

Four candidates passed the Honey bee Health assessment.

I'm working on a course for the second year of beekeeping ie inbetween The Basic (1 year keeping bees) and the Honey Bee Health (three years of keeping bees). I'll be contacting others for input.

Asian hornet:

Still monitoring the situation.

Increased the number of members in our AH Whatsapp group.

BBKA putting together some training for the Autumn. Email sent out to those interested to fill in a form online.

Christine

Gardening Group

Due to the unusual weather, the grass has not needed mowing. It was agreed that bulbs such as snowdrops, crocus, alliums good for pollinators would be purchased. WF to obtain quotes.

ACTION: CB, WF

Patrick

Library & Member talks

PB is trying to get admin account for MM. MM to liaise with PB.

ACTION: PB and MM and RN

Member Talks and Workshops

PB and MM have spoken. Unfortunately, people they tried to book were not available. It was agreed that 2026 the Association should have a budget and book speakers. WF suggested in the survey we also ask members what sort of talks they would like. MM happy to lead on this.

Honey Prep Room

- Committee discussion at next meeting

3. MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCE REPORT - WF

The Finance Report was circulated prior to the Meeting.

Membership:
Registered: 106
Partner: 7
Junior: 2
Country: 2
Family: 3
Associate: 2
Hons: 4
Total: 126

Membership is down. Discussion took place about how to encourage and keep more members.

An Intermediate Course was discussed as a possibility between Basic and Honey Bee Health.

Income Expenditure differential is now on the finance report.
Gift Aid is down.

4. CIO UPDATE (MM)

We have a draft Constitution which will go out to the Committee to review, along with a guidance document. MM will collate the feedback and once agreed, it needs to be signed off by the Committee, after which it will go to the wider Membership. Potentially the CIO could be completed by next April.

ACTION: MM

Thanks recorded to MM for all her work.

5. CORRESPONDENCE REPORT – JH & MM

Correspondence down in summer months. Our reach is 13% up on distribution. Up to 172 on Instagram (from 38).

6. ITEMS TO DISCUSS/VOTE

- **Coffee Van – Saturday 27th September – need someone to let in and close up**

PB (and JH if needed) can help. 0900 – 1500. WF to do a letter.

GE will forward the company details to PB & JH

ACTION: GE, PB, JH

- **Apiary Guide – update & put on website – 2026 issue to students**

- **Student last night plans? – honey ‘gift’**

It was agreed that students who have committed for the whole season be given a jar of honey as a thank you for helping with the honey extraction.

An audit of how much honey is taken off and jarred should be done moving forward.

- **New garden seat purchase**

It was agreed that two new benches would be purchased. Details to be sent to WF to purchase.

ACTION: HK, MM, WF

- **New Tea Urn purchase**

It was agreed that a replacement for the current hot water heater JS to cost one out and report back.

ACTION: JS

- **Toilet door lock upgrade**

Alex to be asked to cost out.

ACTION: AL

- **Bike rack modification**

It was agreed the rack could be modified to remove the sticking out pieces.

ACTION: AL

- **Brass plaque - clean and re-site**

GE to polish the plaque and it would be re-sited in the inner forecourt so it isn't stolen.

ACTION: GE

- **Open Day – Allergy disclaimer – can anyone make one?**

JS to make this. PB added it is the baker's responsibility to provide a list of ingredients

ACTION: JS

- **HPR – issues to resolve – payment feedback loop, software upgrade?, costs summary, current extractor issues - new extractor purchase?**

To be discussed at the next Meeting.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Sub Committee feedback – to think about how these are working and moving forward how they should run. Reports to be issued 48 hours before the Meetings.

For next year, membership, how we educate better and the channels used to educate.

The Committee gave a vote of thanks to Karen Mann who took her own bees to a Habitats and Heritage event in Hounslow last weekend. Previously she had attended an event in St. Margaret's with her bees.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 1st October at 7.30pm in Miller Hall.

OTHER IMPORTANT DATES

Last night for members – Friday 26th September
Honey Show – Friday 3rd, Saturday 4th & Sunday 5th October
President's Evening – Friday 14th November. GE away
Committee Meetings (done) – Apiary schedule
Module Exams – done up to March
Use of Car Park on Rugby days – 27 September

GE thanked everyone for attending and closed the Meeting at 2050.