



Warwick and Leamington Branch of Warwickshire Beekeepers

Your County Needs You

**WBKA AGM Wednesday 23 March 2016 – 7.30pm -
Stoneleigh**

**Request for you to attend and proposal to change WBKA
rule 5a**



At the March 2015 Warwickshire Beekeepers' Association AGM, no nominee came forward for the role of County Chair Elect, and despite several attempts in the meantime, still no one has put their name forward. To compound matters, our County Secretary resigned last year and no successor has been found.

With the help of others, I have given some thought to this situation, especially as without nominees for these two Officer roles, the "County" as an organization ceases to exist.

Naturally, I first needed to decide in my own mind whether having our County structure was important. Why do we need it? I'm afraid the answer is embarrassingly obvious. The whole BBKA structure is designed around regional bodies being "Area Association Members" of the BBKA and individuals being members of both their branch and their regional body. If we didn't have a regional body, individuals would have no link with the BBKA. A principal role of our regional body – WBKA - is to aggregate membership information and to be the communication conduit, in both directions, between members and the BBKA. Put it another way, if the BBKA had all its many branches as direct members, its head office would need to be a much larger and probably a much more bureaucratic and expensive operation – I think we would call it an "ivory tower"! If WBKA ceased to exist, I suggest that in one form or another, it would be re-invented. The County has other more minor essential roles and several valuable, but inessential roles as well.

A second vital reason for the continuation of "the County" is that it provides us with our charity umbrella: we are a registered charity. This places important obligations upon us, but gives us the major benefit of being able to reclaim the income tax (gift aid) equivalent to the income tax most of us have paid on the amount of our income we have used to pay our subscription.

I am therefore convinced we need our regional structure and of course most sporting, social and religious organizations have reached the same conclusion.

You would not read to the end of this article if I elaborated too much upon why I think the role of Chair of the County is not popular. In a nutshell though, it is probably because the County does not currently have a clear idea of its role and direction, ie the Chair may well not know what he/she is there to achieve. To compound matters, the Chair is often seeking to decide on compromises between the views of eight very disparate branches and reach decisions when handling a committee of up to twenty three members. In other words, the specification of the ideal chair is someone with the wisdom of Solomon, the patience of a saint and all the time in the world! I'm afraid too that in the present era, the reward for the Chair's hard work over a two year period is to find that no successor is forthcoming!

I am pleased to say that there is light on the horizon! There are indications that a new team is prepared to modernise our County and communicate its role more clearly, but this will take some debate and will have to lead to some rule changes. To facilitate this I suggest a priority is to make decision making by the Executive Committee more efficient, whilst ensuring it is fully representative of grass roots opinion.

Thus at the County AGM on Wednesday 23 March it is proposed to make four rule changes. Only one, which will reduce the County Executive Committee from 23 to 14, is quoted in full below, as the other three concerning quorums, voting and nomination of branch representatives are consequent upon the first. I ask the membership as a whole to try and make time to attend our County AGM to support the proposal that County Rule 5a is changed from:

"The Business of the Association shall be conducted by the Trustees of the Association who are the Executive Committee consisting of Chairman, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer (referred to herein as the Executive Officers) together with the President, the immediate past Chairman (during the first year of office of the current Chairman), the Chairman-elect (during the second year of office of the current Chairman) and two accredited representatives from each Branch."

to:

"The Business of the Association shall be conducted by the Trustees of the Association who are the Executive Committee consisting of Chairman, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer (referred to herein as the Executive Officers) together with the President, the immediate past Chairman (during the first year of office of the current Chairman), the Chairman- elect (during the second year of office of the current Chairman) and one accredited representative (Trustee) from each Branch, who will normally be the principal representative. However in the absence of the principal representative, the alternative representative should attend. There may be circumstances in which both the principal and alternate representative wish to attend, and where this is the case, only one representative may vote.

This Rule change is proposed by Tim Foden – Warwick & Leamington Branch and seconded by Douglas Nethercleft of Shipston Branch.

Tim Foden – February 2016

Practical Beekeeping Training Course 2016

We will again be providing practical beekeeping training for novices or near novices at our Dalehouse Lane training apiary, situated at the junction of Dalehouse Lane and Stoneleigh Road near Kenilworth. Subject to demand, we will provide training from 7pm until approx. 9pm every Tuesday and Thursday for separate groups commencing Tuesday 26 or Thursday 28 April

The training will involve:

- carrying out the necessary seasonal husbandry as the colonies require,
- addressing fundamental manipulations eg opening, examining and closing a hive, queen marking & clipping, comb changing, queen introduction, swarm management, adding and removing supers, disease inspections and much more,
- a series of short discussions about key aspects of beekeeping eg hygiene, safety and protective clothing, swarm control, diseases, managing a smoker, beespace, types of queen excluder etc.

Participants will be encouraged to attend our branch-wide presentations on swarm control and honey processing. There is a great deal to cover and those joining us are expected to attend most weeks in order to get the most from what we offer.

This training complements the knowledge acquired on an Introduction to Beekeeping Course. Attendance on such a course is not a pre-requisite. Anyone attending who has not acquired the fundamental theory will be directed to text books.

This training is available to all Full, Partner and Junior members with no fee being payable.

Please enrol for this training by completing the booking form on the home page of our website

www.warleambees.org.uk

Tim Foden

Spring Walk Sunday April 3rd at 11am

We will be walking around the Hunningham area, doing a circular walk of approx 5 miles. We will meet at the Red Lion Pub car park, Hunningham CV33 9DY, at 10.30am for 11o/c start. The walk will hopefully be dog friendly, depending on what animals are in the fields at the time. If the weather is wet, bring wellies as some parts will be muddy. Lunch will be available at the Red Lion for those who want to eat, with a veggie option. Pub website for menu and prices www.redlionhunningham.co.uk

If you are interested please contact Keith Henry, on 01926 632076 or email kp2henry@yahoo.co.uk as we need to know numbers for the Pub. Hope to see all the walkers amongst us there, members and partners all welcome.

For Sale

Polystyrene National bee hive empty £45

4 poly supers £8 each. 2 ekes £2 each,

frames with drawn wax for supers, honey buckets, nylon double strainer sieves, rhombus bee escape, contact feeder, mouse guards, other bits & pieces make offer 01926 512653

Wanted for Dalehouse Lane Apiary portacabin

If anyone has a galvanised mop bucket they no longer use, could they contact Val Dillon val.dillon@outlook.com or Mick Smith michael.smith670@ntlworld.com please?

Volunteers required to staff the BBKA “Swarm Line”

The British Beekeepers' Association (BBKA) headquarters is situated at the National Agricultural Centre at Stoneleigh. During the swarming season they receive many telephone enquiries from the general public about bees and insects in general. The BBKA administrative staff would welcome assistance from Warwick & Leamington Branch members during weekdays in dealing with these calls. We have some past experience in dealing with these enquiries which has been very interesting and enlightening.

You may remember that the Branch agreed to assist last year by manning a telephone at the Headquarters and dealing with all enquiries relating to swarms ('swarmline'). It was extremely successful, we covered 63% of the sessions, and BBKA have asked if we would do the same again this year.

To do this we require volunteers who would be prepared to spend a half day, morning or afternoon, sitting at BBKA HQ taking telephone calls from the general public and advising accordingly. We are also approaching the County.

It is envisaged that we would be required from the beginning of May until mid July, but this will be dependent on the weather.

Please do volunteer if you feel that you have the time. Identify a vacant half day slot from the diary accessible via the link on the home page of our website www.warleambees.org.uk and email Peter Stanworth, who will make an entry in the diary – peterstanworth@btinternet.com or Tim Foden - tim_foden@hotmail.com

The BBKA staff will be very grateful for our assistance, which will go some way in thanking them for the help they give us.

Peter Stanworth

Hints and Tips

Since ancient times bees were regarded as messengers of the gods. Bee keepers whispered family news, good or bad, into the hive so they could convey messages to the gods who would sort out family problems... So you know what to do now!!

It was also believed that bees can respond to the human voice, angry bee keepers have angry bees. So it was believed that swearing in the hearing of your bees would make them fly away and leave the hive..... Be warned!!

And to complete these ancient words of wisdom I leave you with this 17th century rhyme

A swarm of bees in May
Is worth a load of hay

A swarm of bees in June
Is worth a silver spoon

A swarm of bees in July
Is hardly worth a fly!

If you have any hints or tips that you would like to share, please send them to h.essex@virgin.net...

Thank you Helen Essex

County AGM and 2015 Accounts

The County AGM at 7.30pm on Wednesday 23 March has been mentioned elsewhere in Beetalk and in WB. This is to let you know that the County accounts are now available via the County website warwickshirebeekeepers.org.uk if you would like to look at them before they are reported on at the AGM.

An issue to be voted on at the AGM is a proposed reduction from 23 to 15 in attendance at County Executive Committee meetings to make decision making more efficient and to make the Chair's role more viable. If you could find the time to attend this meeting and vote on this proposal it would be appreciated. If this change is accepted, it will facilitate a continuation and further evolution of Warwickshire Beekeepers' Association.

Tim Foden

Editor Roger Wilkes, email address is roger.wilkes@kenilworthhoney.co.uk or hard copy can be posted to him at: 12 Mercia Avenue, Kenilworth, CV8 1EU. **Content to him for next month by March 27th, latest!**

Please send in plain text, unformatted, using Microsoft Word or another common program.

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