

## Honey Bee Health Strategy

### Bee Health Improvement Partnership (BHIP)

15<sup>th</sup> August 2019 – Battleby, Perth,

#### Attendees:

NAME	ORGANISATION	POSITION
Fiona Hight	SG-SASA	Senior Entomologist
Luis Molero	SG	Lead Bee Inspector
Gavin Ramsay	SBA	Bee Health Convener
Alan Riach	SBA	President
Phil McAnespie	SBA	Vice President
Bron Wright	SBA	Past President
Margaret Thomas	BFA	Representative
Murray McGregor	BFA	Representative
Jackie Quigley	SG	Secretariat
Sarah Gallagher	SG	Secretariat

#### Apologies:

NAME	ORGANISATION
Graeme Sharpe	SRUC
Margaret Ginman	BFA
Helen Nelson	SBA

#### NOTE OF MEETING:

##### Item 1: Welcome and apologies

- Fiona welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- Apologies received from Margaret Ginman and Graeme Sharpe

##### Item 2: Minutes and Actions Points (7<sup>th</sup> May 2019)

- Previous minutes were approved.

##### Items 3: Formal introduction of new LBI and other staffing news

- Luis Molero is the New Lead Bee Inspector for Scotland. Fiona introduced Luis to the group and he gave a bit of background information on his previous work in APHA and about how he started working with Bees.
- John Smith & Jim Anderson both bee inspectors will be retiring from the SG in August and September respectively.
- The Bee Team still has Angus, Gordon, Claire, Ailis and Nicola when she comes back from maternity leave next year.

- Douglas Petrie is going to enquire about getting more inspectors who have an interest in Bees to become Bee Inspectors. We may even be able to get people from other sectors who have come into the SG as we need more inspectors to take the burden off the inspectors we already have. The Bee Inspectors at the moment are staying away from home for long periods of time, if we had more staff this could be alternated to give people more time at home.

#### **Item 4: Training events – feedback received and looking forward**

- There were two Bee Health Days held this year, one in Kelso and one in Dunblane. The training teams for these BHD's consist of SG, SRUC and volunteers from SBA & BFA (Gavin Ramsay & Margaret Thomas). The days consist of talks in the morning and workshops in the afternoon.
- Bron Wright received good feedback from the young beekeepers who attended the Kelso event.
- There is a new SQA qualification in Bee Keeping and it was suggested that we could have a training day for students who are doing their National 5. There are possibly another 4 schools who are wanting to take up the National 5 in Beekeeping.
- It was also suggested that since some local associations don't have any young members it would be a good idea to try and encourage them to join and possibly have a mentor from the association.
- Bee Associations usually ask us they can hold a BHD in their area. Sometimes however we try and target an area where there is a high risk of infection.
- **ACTION POINT: Fiona to contact Mhairi regarding accommodation for the BHD in Glasgow**
- Bee Farmers & Bee Inspectors training. There may need to be a stricter approach needed with the Bee Farmers.

### **Item 5: Inspections Update**

- There had been 3078 colony inspections recorded on beebase to 14 August (<http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/public/BeeDiseases/colonyReport.cfm>), this is compared to 3782 in 2018 although inspections aren't finished yet.
- There has been 120 cases of EFB this year and 10 cases of AFB.
- Luis has been out on inspections and had seen EFB
- There has been problems with the lack of inspectors this season and will continue to get worse if we don't get new resources for next season.
- Next seasons priority is to get on top of the Foulbrood and to have measures in place to avoid entry of an exotic invasive pest as AH or SHB.

### **Item 6: SBA Update**

- Good Highland Show and thank you for attending. There were approximately 8500 people each day through the door which is higher than last year.
- Also noticed a change of attitude from the parents who are becoming more involved with the children and asking a lot more questions.
- Beekeeping exams are taking place but there isn't a lot of uptake on the advance exam.

### **Item 7: BFA Update**

- As Margaret Ginman was unable to attend Murray gave a quick update. Murray McGregor raised concerns with the levels of EFB found this year across the country.

### **Item 8: NDB Update**

- The NDB had exams at Auchencruive this year and would like to thank Graeme for arranging this. There were three candidates and it was an extremely busy day. Also like to thank SASA for the comb the provided for the exam.

### **Item 9: IMYB 2019 Update**

- Please see the attached report on how the young beekeepers got on in Slovakia this year. Congratulations to Martin Leahy who won "Young beekeeper of the year". Well done to all those who attended and we look forward to next year.

#### **Item 10: Steve Sunderland – redirected but not retired**

- Recently retired as Lead Bee Inspector, Stephen Sunderland gave a brief update on three areas he is involved in:
- As the Bee Farmers Association Project Development Officer, the role involves the roll out of an adult training programme scheduled for early October 2019
- The work contracted through the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) to provide a technical expert consultancy for beekeeping has now concluded for 2019. It was an interesting insight into the world of auditing and encouraging that such organisations exist ensuring a high standard of excellence is maintained
- Focus Group 34 on “Bee health and sustainable beekeeping” is currently working remotely and virtually towards the next face to face meeting in Bologna, Italy in early October. Currently the members are working on mini papers which will develop and be incorporated in the final paper scheduled for completion in early March 2020. More information available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/en/focus-groups/bee-health-and-sustainable-beekeeping>

#### **Item 11: BHAF Update**

- The NBU inspectors now use iPads to capture the B2's out in the field
- The English inspections team have been sending inspectors to Jersey to do track & trace for Asian Hornet. Once Scotland has the resources we will send people to Jersey to do the training also.
- There has been an update on the Apiculture programme
- Queen rearing

#### **Item 12: KPIs and looking towards the new strategy**

- KPIs are still ongoing as Sarah and Jackie thought it would be useful to have the input of Luis and Nick. Since Luis has just started in his new role there has been little time to go over this at present

#### **Item 13: EU Consultation – Implications for EFB**

- Gavin sent a reply in on behalf of the SBA
- Looks like it is going to stay the same

- Bees can't be traded internationally without a health certificate

#### **Item 14: Pollinator Strategy**

- Jim Jeffrey from SNH gave a talk on the Pollinator Strategy. The Pollinator Strategy is a ten year plan running from 2017 to 2027. The aim is to address the causes of decline in populations, diversity and range of our pollinator species, and to help them thrive into the future.
- Scottish Pollinators have a blog which can be found at <https://scottishpollinators.wordpress.com/>
- Twitter feed: <https://twitter.com/ScotPollinators>
- Website: <https://www.nature.scot/scotlands-biodiversity/helping-scotlands-pollinators>
- And also a resource page <https://www.nature.scot/scotlands-biodiversity/helping-scotlands-pollinators/pollinators-resources> this page contains three children's activity/posters. These posters and indeed any of our leaflets, pop ups or videos are freely available for any group to use at their meetings or events.
- **ACTION POINT** – Jim Jeffrey and BHIP to agree a SBA representative for pollinator strategy
- **ACTION POINT** - BHIP to consider 'good news stories' for pollinator's blog.

#### **Item 15: Dates and Venue for remaining meeting**

- Future meetings will be held on:  
Steering Group – 14 November 2019 at Battleby

**Bee Health Improvement Partnership  
August 2019**

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**Report for Information to BHIP, 15 August 2019  
Bron Wright, SBA**

**International Meeting of Young Beekeepers, 3-7 July, Banska Bystrica,  
Slovakia.**

**Team Scotland 2019.**

Martin Leahy, 15, Tarland Bee Club, Emily Oakes, 14, and Jaimee Kirk, 13, Annan Academy Bee Club, reserve Harvey Moffet, 13, Edinburgh and Midlothian BKA. Accompanying adults, Bron Wright, organiser, SBA Trustee and Michelle Berry, SBA Development Officer.

Enormous support came from parents who had to put up with many emails and phone calls while providing details necessary for organising the trip, they also gave up time to transport team members to meetings and they supplied gifts to be given to other teams.

Beekeeping tuition and support came from SBA Trustees, team members' mentors, their local bee clubs and associations, especially Ms Lorraine Johnston of Annan Academy, and the BHIP Team, led by Steve Sunderland, Graeme Sharpe, and Fiona Highet and Mairi Carnegie at SASA.

Lorraine Priestly, Annan, gave gifts and John Mellis gave heather honey for the honey tasting in Slovakia.

Michelle was invaluable with providing support throughout and particularly with her communication and ICT skills.

A very big thank you must go to all the above people for their help in creating a really great and successful Team Scotland this year.

**Preparations for the Meeting**

A risk assessment, ground rules for behaviour, including what to do in emergencies, an itinerary and suggested kit list were issued to parents and team members.

Copies of documents were sent to Alan Riach and Phil McAnespie, SBA President and Vice President respectively.

Group insurance was difficult to obtain so each family took out personal insurance to cover their son or daughter.

Emails to the team were always sent through the parents, with the team member copied in.

Both BW and MB hold Advanced Disclosure Certificates.

A request from the organisers was made to BW for the English to be checked and corrected in a bank of 400+ multiple choice questions to be used in the competition. All participating countries had originally contributed questions to the bank, leading to many variations in the use of English.

Since team members lived in the north, south, west and central belt of Scotland, meeting physically was difficult, so an introductory meeting via 'GoTo', hosted by Phil McAnespie, was arranged, which allowed the Team, their parents, MB and BW, to meet each other virtually and share information and ask questions. This worked well removing the need to travel.

Jaimee, Emily and Harvey attended the Bee Health day held at Kelso Academy by arrangement with Steve and the BHIP team. Martin had previously attended two Bee Health days.

All the Team attended the Royal Highland Show to spend time stewarding in the Honey Tent. They took part in all the activities, talking to the visitors about bees and beekeeping, practising candle rolling and honey tasting and learning about skep making with Dave Wright. Harriet Sweatman, from 2018 IMYB Team Scotland, came along to pass on experiences from last year and also to steward.

A 'Team Workshop Day' was held in Edinburgh at BW's house with MB, the Team and Harriet, allowing everybody to further get to know each other, and the team to revise and practice some beekeeping skills and to plan Team Scotland's IMYB presentation. The day's activities included bee themed biscuit decorating, frame making, microscopy, plant and honey identification, honey bee anatomy, identifying beekeeping tools and their use, and multiple-choice questions.

Team Scotland's presentation to introduce themselves at IMYB would use the musical talent of the team. It was decided that Emily would play the Skye Boat Song on the violin, Jaimee would play Auld Lang Syne on the keyboard and Martin would compere and recite a Burns poem, part of 'Address to a Haggis'. The IMYB organisers were asked if they could provide a violin and a keyboard, which they kindly did. At the performance all was very well received, with tears being shed during the Skye Boat Song, and much lively audience participation to accompany Auld Lang Syne.

### **Travel.**

Flights were from Edinburgh to Vienna, via Paris, return, with Air France, booked through KLM.

All went according to plan, both ways.

### **The IMYB Meeting**

The venue was the Secondary Vocational School, Banska Bystrica, since 1984 a centre for the development of countryside and agritourism, including the only beekeeping school in Slovakia.

The emphasis of the meeting was on beekeeping, culture and socialising, and the programme consisted of the beekeeping competition and social activities.

Twenty nine countries were represented, twenty five with full teams of three, and with seventy nine young beekeepers taking part.

The young beekeepers were divided into sixteen internationally mixed teams of five, distinguished by different coloured T-shirts, each with a Facilitator, a young beekeeper who had previously attended IMYB and whose job was to guide their team throughout the meeting.

This year, the beekeeping competition consisted of eleven practical tasks and one of multiple choice questions. Categories were, frame making; drone marking; grafting;

sorting tools and identifying their use and assembling a beehive; plant and honey identification (OSR, Acacia, Honey-dew, Sunflower, Cherry); microscopy; making a nucleus; uncapping and inserting frames into an extractor; extracting honey; audio visual recordings to identify sounds in the hive; 30 multiple choice questions. Examiners simultaneously assessed each internationally mixed team and its individuals, and at the end teams, individuals and countries were ranked. The top three international teams, the top ten country teams and the three individuals with the highest marks were announced.

A day and a half was spent on the tasks with Slovakian, English and Russian the main languages used. Teams used a mix of language and mime to get through the tasks, with good humour and patience added.

Team Scotland were surprised that only half bee suits were used and no gloves allowed. We had been told that the bees were very quiet, however several stings did happen.

Accompanying adults did not take any part in the 'competition' but were shown round the task stations after the teams had finished.

In the social programme the teams visited Banska Bystrica town for an afternoon enjoying the colourful sights and each other's company. They also spent a day visiting the famous Harmanecka Cave system where the temperature is always between 5.8 and 6.4 C, and where Team Scotland felt quite at home in the cool unlike many of the others.

Accompanying adults attended a lecture on Honey dew honey production and a seminar exploring educational activities with young beekeepers. A visit was arranged to a bee farmer who now produces pollen as his main product because it has a higher market value than honey and whose main 'enemy' were three local bears who he had great trouble outwitting when it came to honey theft. Adults also visited Chopok in the Tatra Mountains.

### **Outcome of the Competition.**

In the individual competition, out of seventy nine participants, Martin was the overall winner and proclaimed 'Young beekeeper of the year'.

In the internationally mixed team competition out of sixteen teams, Martin and young people from Canada, Israel, France and Slovenia came second. Jaimee and young people from Romania, Slovakia, Czech Republic and France came third.

Emily with team mates from Belarus, Finland, Ukraine and Denmark came sixth.

In the country competition, out of twenty nine countries being represented this year, Scotland was placed seventh, with the Czech Republic, first, followed by Slovakia, Germany, Austria, Ukraine and Belarus in the top six places.

Team Scotland's performance at IMYB was exceptional. The results were a huge tribute to their beekeeping knowledge and the respectful, good natured and sensible



approach that they had throughout the competition. Altogether a very successful, memorable experience for all.