

## Healthy Bees Plan

### Summary note of 3rd Meeting of the Communications Working Group (CWG)

24<sup>th</sup> March 2010 - Millbank, London

Present:

Richard Ball	NBU, Fera	Gay Marris	NBU, FERA
Dan Basterfield	Bee Farmers' Association	Liz McIntosh	FERA
Amy Byrne	WAG	Trish O'Donnell	Defra (Strategic Communications Adviser)
Brian Clark	Welsh BKA newsletter	Carl Reynolds	Carl Reynolds Associates (Chair)
Helen Crews	FERA	Robert Smith	Beekeeper
Robin Dean	Bee Farmers' Association	Alison Wilson	FERA
Marie Holmes	FERA (Secretary of Group)		

Apologies: Claire Waring, Editor of BeeCraft, Joanne Smith, Defra Marketing, Rob Chilton, Fera Marketing and Communications Manager and David Bancalari, Bee Farmers Association (who has now withdrawn from the Group).

#### 1. Welcome and introductions, recap on Terms of Reference

Trish O'Donnell welcomed the Group including newly appointed interim Chair Carl Reynolds. Carl was introduced as an experienced facilitator and engagement specialist and was welcomed as the interim Chair of this working group.

The Chair asked the Group whether in the light of experience the terms of reference were fit for purpose. Dan Basterfield commented that the terms were fine although highlighted that the CWG needed to be mindful of the 6<sup>th</sup> bullet point 'will work in the best interests of the public purse' when weighing up evidence and value for money. Bob Smith suggested we met more frequently than the two times a year suggested in the ToR and that the notes were published on BeeBase and not Fera's website as previously stated. The Group agreed that the ToR should be amended to state that the Group would meet a minimum of four times a year and to work out of committee, such as by teleconference if required.

**ACTION:** Marie Holmes to amend ToR to reflect above.

Liz McIntosh and Helen Crews thanked the group for all their valued efforts to date. Liz provided an update on David Bancalari's withdrawal and took the opportunity to thank David for all his input and to his agreeing to continue to receive papers produced for the Group.

**ACTION:** Liz McIntosh to write letter of thanks to David.

## 2. Report from PMB and from 1<sup>st</sup> meetings of SEAG and HEG working groups. Input into SEAG and HEG workplans

Helen Crews reported back from the PMB and announced the good news that BBKA were to return to the Board. Following discussions with Martin Smith, Tim Lovett and Brian Ripley, the BBKA confirmed they were to re-join the PMB with up to three board members to reflect the large number of beekeepers represented by the BBKA. Helen also reported the Scottish Government have joined BeeBase. They have been invited as observers to HBP working groups and were in the process of developing their own honey bee strategy.

The Office of Government Commerce spent four days at Sand Hutton w/c 15/03/2010 reviewing the Healthy Bees Plan with the view to make recommendations to ensure implementation of the plan was fit for purpose and to help inform the business plan for future funding. Report was to be submitted to Fera w/c 29/03/2010.

A discussion was held on the pilot roadshows. Richard Ball reported there were requests for a further four roadshows in the South West and noted that over half of the participants who attended the workshops were alerted via e-mail. He suggested that we should use BeeBase to advertise to individuals by e-mail. Brian Clark also noted the merit of this by pointing out it was published as an article in the Welsh BKA newsletter but it seemed to be e-mail which publicised the events to greater effect and advised we should target individuals and not just secretaries of associations. Liz informed the group of a follow up exercise Marie Holmes would be undertaking on assessing the effectiveness and value for money of the roadshows. This would include follow up phone interviews of up to twenty attendees to find out if they had adopted any of the new practices they had learned at the roadshows. The report would be considered by CWG and HEG.

**ACTION:** Marie Holmes to circulate to CWG the summary feedback sheet for each roadshow and the final report on the roadshows.

The Chair noted that the analysis should cover channels for inviting beekeepers to attend and assessment of impacts including changes in behaviour.

The Group then reviewed the first draft of the workplans for HEG and SEAG, which the secretariat had put together from the initial discussions at the first meetings of these new groups.

CWG was invited to offer comments on these early drafts with the aim of identifying work activities to which they would need to provide communications input.

### HEG

- #2 'Best practice guidelines'. Request made for HEG to keep CWG updated with progress on this given the close links to our work, in particular how best to promote these guidelines to beekeepers. One suggestion was that CWG should turn these guidelines into a slick set of presentations for trainers to use and this should be added to the HEG workplan.
- #3 'Develop model for beekeeper learning'. Raised as a possibility for this to move to CWG workplan, but the group felt this was within the HEG remit.

- #5 'review impact of roadshows'. It was noted the report from the roadshows could be used as part of the evidence base for CWG strategy. Measures of success was whether they changed beekeepers behaviour.

### SEAG

- #3 'Assess results and implications from first year of Random Apiary Survey'. It was agreed that the preliminary results from the RAS would be circulated to CWG for input. Helen Crews clarified that the results would include caveats to guide interpretation.
- #s 6 'Review knowledge about pest and disease issues' & 8 'Carry out horizon scanning'. CWG agreed that they would provide input on dissemination but not on analysis or interpretation.
- #9 'Consider domestic biosecurity'. CWG recommended that this activity should move from low priority to high. A debate was held on the definition of biosecurity and what exactly was meant by this as there could potentially be three interpretations; keeping pests out, sale and movement and bees and apiary hygiene. CWG recommended that SEAG should revisit this work activity, be more specific about usage and move to high priority.

**ACTION:** Liz McIntosh to inform SEAG.

### 3. Coordinated communications strategy and planning matrix

The Chair emphasised the strategy was a living document which would be reviewed and added to in light of such things as the roadshows etc. The strategy was intended to be a high level framework of agreed principles. The planning matrix was aimed at implementing the strategy, for example agreeing specific messages for specific segments. The CWG workplan would be informed by both the strategy and planning matrix. Bob noted we shouldn't add further documents as three was enough to set out our coordinated communications activities. There was a consensus between the group to limit the number of documents added to this area and to add a new risk to the risk log about the relationships between them. The Group discussed whether 'unregistered/unknown' beekeepers (page 6) should be moved from primary to secondary audiences. CWG agreed it should stay in primary for time being but would be reviewed. CWG also agreed to seek advice from SEAG on the size of this group of beekeepers and what risk they posed to honeybee health, particularly if they remained as unknowns. As a result of re-visiting the strategy the group agreed it could be signed off. CWG also agreed that the communications strategy should be turned into a word document with an executive summary.

**ACTION:** Liz McIntosh to seek advice from SEAG on unknown beekeepers.

**ACTION:** Marie Holmes to turn communications strategy into word document with executive summary.

Alison Wilson introduced the planning matrix and asked the Group whether the correct segments were identified and who were our priorities within those segments. The Group came up with the following suggestions for the planning matrix:

- Remove 'Existing beekeepers – not on BeeBase' segment as duplicated with 'Existing beekeepers – set in ways' segment.
- Replace BBKA with BKA's

- Replace 'British beekeeping associations' segment with 'National beekeeping associations'.
- Add 'Inspectorate service' as a segment
- Merge 'First season beekeepers – not on BeeBase' with 'New beekeepers' (removing 1-2 years reference)

**ACTION:** All – Any further comments to Alison Wilson by 16<sup>th</sup> April.

**ACTION:** Alison Wilson to amend planning matrix to reflect above.

**ACTION:** CWG extended a formal thank you to Rob Chilton who had prepared the first draft of the planning matrix.

#### 4. CWG Workplan

Liz requested comments/feedback on the draft CWG workplan. During a brief discussion, the Group highlighted:

- More detail was required - For each activity the tasks associated with achieving the activity should be noted, even if there were many tasks. This way the evidence of achievement was documented and a clear picture of our work was represented. Suggested elements from the communications strategy (quick wins/slow burns) should be added in here, and the ongoing action plan to raise awareness about BeeBase.
- H/M/L priorities – CWG agreed that each work activity would be set H/M/L priority for first two years of implementation (01/04/2009 to 31/03/2011).
- Swap 'dependencies' and 'target start/completion date' columns.
- Communicate best practice guidelines as a specific work area.

**ACTION:** Marie Holmes to arrange Fera sub-group to review and input detail into workplan. Once more detail input, we would circulate to CWG for comment.

#### 5 & 6. Assimilation tests and assessing effectiveness of comms/advisory material

The Chair introduced the concept note for educational and information materials review. This was intended as a helpful document designed to establish effectiveness of materials with lots of ideas outlining conception through to use. The Chair enquired whether this document was useful and if so should the CWG undertake some of this work. Bob felt the ideas in the note were useful for the leaflets but would be harder for assessing effectiveness of roadshows and BeeBase. Trish O'Donnell suggested that it would make sense to test new measures routinely through a beekeepers panel for example.

A brief discussion was held on effectiveness of leaflets and brochures and idea of a laminated wipe-clean single sheet for use in the field for identifying/dealing with key pests and diseases would be helpful. Brian Clark mentioned the WBKA were developing an A6 pocket sized booklet for use in the field which would be issued for free to members. The Group enquired whether review of usefulness of this booklet should be a work activity for CWG. Bee inspectors in Wales could be asked to check on implementation. Amy Byrne queried whether the messages in the booklet were consistent with those of the NBU, BBKA etc. This was important and was being addressed by the NBU.

Bob suggested testing new materials on test audiences and he could offer to carry out informal feedback from an audience at various stages of beekeeping.

The Chair noted CWG's general agreement to proceeding with effectiveness and assimilation testing with focus on getting some quick wins.

**ACTION:** Marie Holmes to check with Brain Clark and Andy Wattam whether the booklet would become a work activity of the CWG.

#### 7. Exotic threats contingency plan

Liz explained that the report of contingency plan for exotic pests was nearing completion and invited the Group to reflect on the media plan for the contingency plan such as press releases etc. We would be visiting this in more detail at the next meeting.

**ACTION:** All – Forward any initial thoughts for media plan to Liz McIntosh.

#### 8. Communication of surveys

Gay Marris gave an update on communications of surveys. The NBU (Selwyn Wilkins) were putting the finishing touches to the husbandry survey and had contacted BFA, WBKA, BBKA, NI, Scottish Government & SBA in an effort to avoid duplication and to ensure collection and collation of as much data as possible for the UK. This sharing of information should be encouraged between beekeeping organisations to minimise the number of surveys and to prevent overlap. It was suggested whether it would be possible for a member of the NBU to feedback to CWG on a range of surveys and to take ownership of this in the workplan. Gay agreed this was a good idea and would work with Selwyn to feedback to future meetings and that this would be included in the CWG's workplan. Gay also offered to circulate to the group the final draft of the husbandry survey next week when available (w/c 29/03/2010).

ACTION: Gay Marris to circulate final draft of husbandry survey to group.

Date of next Meeting Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2010

Healthy Bees Project Team  
Fera  
25 March 2010