

**THE HEALTHY BEES PLAN
HUSBANDRY AND EDUCATION GROUP (HEG)
SUMMARY NOTE OF 4th MEETING ON 22 NOVEMBER 2010**

Participants (by teleconference):

Helen Crews (Chair)	Richard Ball (NBU)	Ken Basterfield	Chris Deaves
Kim Chadwick (Fera) Secretary	Ken Edwards	Ian Homer (NBU)	Geoff Hopkinson
Roger Lacey	Liz McIntosh (Fera)	Ged Marshall	Graham Royle
Andy Wattam (NBU)	Selwyn Wilkins (NBU)		

Welcome and introductions

1. Liz McIntosh welcomed everyone to the fourth meeting of the group. Apologies had been received from Serena Watts, Terry Gibson and Margaret Thomas.

Summary and actions from last meeting

2. The note of the last meeting was agreed and has been posted on BeeBase. The actions from the last meeting were –
 - (i) Charging for roadshow attendance – No comments had been received following the last meeting on whether charging should be introduced for roadshows (or other training events). Opinion amongst members of HEG remained mixed. Several members supported charging not least because it helped to manage the training event (e.g., organisers would know the numbers due to attend etc) and to recover costs; in addition, new beekeepers did expect to pay for training. Other members were against charging on the basis that it would deter some people from attending.

The meeting concluded that charging was at discretion of training organisers; and, if a fee was to be charged, it was important to explain the reason for charging (e.g., cost recovery) as well as providing a clear statement of the course's purpose and the intended audience.

Action: Kim Chadwick to check Defra study of beekeeping practices to see if the survey of beekeepers included any questions on charging for training, and to report back to next meeting of HEG.

- (ii) Bees in schools – Ian Homer was discussing further with a local school how to build honey bees into the curriculum. Chris Deaves mentioned that the BBKA had explored this idea previously and it was important not to lose sight of it. Information regarding risk assessments, (CLEAPPS covered these for schools) was available on the BBKA website.

- (iii) Train the trainer (preparing to teach in lifelong learning) – the second phase of the initiative had commenced with nominations invited from local associations who had not responded to the first tranche in early 2010; about 12 nominations had been received so far.

Action: Kim Chadwick to extend the invitation to all other beekeeping associations although emphasising that courses would need to be taken and/or paid for before the end of March 2011.

Business Case

3. Liz McIntosh updated the meeting on the latest position regarding the Business Case. This would be discussed with Brian Harding, the Defra Owner, before the end of November. The Business Case was looking for around 50% of the current funding for Phase 2 (next 4 years) of the Healthy Bees Plan. (This was in addition to the funding of the core programme which was expected to be unchanged.)
4. As regards the detail of the Case, cost sharing with beekeeping stakeholder was a key principle continuing from Phase 1. Year 1 of Phase 2 only included a small budget for education activities. The success of the Phase 1 education activities, particularly the jointly funded Fera/BBKA Course in a Case would be assessed by Fera in year 1 of Phase 2; subject to the success of that initiative, further co-funding for education may be available in years 2-4. Similarly, the results of the Random Apiary Survey available in year 1 would be important evidence for the review of disease control policy and the inspection programme for future years.
5. The Business Case included a draft progress report on the achievements of Phase 1, including a set of progress indicators which had been developed by the Healthy Bees Plan Science and Evidence Group.

Action: Liz McIntosh to circulate indicators and progress report to HEG.

6. Further progress on the Business Case would be reported to the next PMB meeting in December.
7. Helen Crews explained that the governance for Phase 2 of the Healthy Bees Plan needed to be considered in the light of the review on implementation conducted in early 2010 by the Office of Government Commerce. The review had recommended a delivery team responsible to a project board. (As noted when discussing the Business Case) Defra was also keen on Fera setting up a forum which brought together stakeholders with established or potential interests in honey bees to look at other sources of funding, in recognition that Government could not be the sole funder of initiatives to promote bee health.
8. Helen reported that the role of the current Healthy Bees implementation working groups, including HEG, would need to be reviewed in any future governance model with the possibility that some of these groups would not continue. She invited members to comment on the merits and effectiveness of HEG during Phase 1. During a brief tour de table, the consensus was that HEG had been a useful forum for uniting the various interests and for influencing priorities for education activities. Richard Ball suggested

that it would make sense for HEG to join up with the Communications Working Group (CWG) given their similar briefs.

9. Helen Crews concluded that the role of each of the Healthy Bees working groups would need to be considered by Fera once the funding for Phase 2 was known. It was agreed that other organisations, such as the CLA could also be key players in any future model.

HEG Workplan

10. This item had been requested by Ken Basterfield at the last meeting. Ken had proposed that HEG had a role in identifying and developing beekeeping principles or standards and had suggested a review of HEG's workplan and priorities to ensure that this work could proceed.

Beekeeper standards

11. Ken Basterfield noted that the BBKA's Course in a Case was defining various beekeeper standards/skills, although not necessarily best practice, nor was BBKA intending to standardise best practice. Chris Deaves explained that this had been considered with the Course in a Case team but it had proved difficult to reach agreement on standards. Ken was keen to establish valid principles, rather than setting standards. HEG recognised that it was important to at least agree on practices which were acceptable. Ian Homer reported that the intention of the emerging set of good practice templates, which he had been developing with Richard Ball, was to set out the key points or principles of good practice on a number of topics.
12. The meeting agreed that the emerging good practice templates provided the key principles that beekeepers needed to follow. It was agreed that the quality of the templates was very good but it was important to ensure that beekeepers read them – trainers had an important role in encouraging beekeepers to read and adopt the key principles. The templates could be used in various ways – standalone and/or part of a set and/or incorporated into the Course in a Case.
13. All agreed that the templates when ready needed to be made available to beekeepers through a variety of routes, including through direct mail shots from BeeBase, through local beekeeping associations and national beekeeping press. It was suggested that local associations could appoint leads for promoting the templates. Chris Deaves explained that the channels of communications between the BBKA Executive and the local associations was complex and measures were being developed to improve the process. It was noted that the BBKA news had plans to promote the templates. Liz McIntosh reminded HEG that the CWG was working on standardised presentation format for the templates in order to present them in the most accessible way. This would be shared with HEG. Ian Homer stressed that it was important to ensure that in changing the format of the templates, the sense of the wording was not altered.
14. Helen urged HEG members to respond to invitations from Kim, Richard or Ian to provide comments on the draft emerging templates, which would be circulated to HEG in draft as a routine inviting comments.

15. **Actions:** (i) Chris Deaves to incorporate templates into the yellow course in a case; (ii) Helen and Liz to work with Ivor Davis, Chris Deaves and local associations to find workable solutions to distributing the templates to their members and to report back to Fera/NBU on how they have used the templates; (iii) Fera/NBU to produce one page flyer promoting the templates and weblink to BeeBase; (iv) Fera/NBU to develop fully-referenced versions of the templates to show the evidence used, as necessary, as the basis of the principles/advice (available as a reference tool should beekeepers request further information); (v) Liz to circulate CWG's draft presentation format for the template to HEG.

Accreditation

16. Ken Basterfield doubted that professional accreditation for students was needed at this stage. It was important that the BBKA to get their training out now, and this was in hand, but how would they ensure that it actually took place? Accreditation of the delivery process and trainers could be viewed as a marketing tool and had long term possibilities but was not essential at this stage. It had not proved possible to find anyone within LANTRA to take this forward. Chris Deaves explained he had had discussions with LANTRA but availability of funding was an issue. Helen Crews suggested that accreditation was about the process – the content was up to the users.
17. Accreditation options would be considered in the workshop item later in the agenda and would be led by Chris Deaves.

Roadshow follow up

18. Liz McIntosh presented the feedback which had been obtained during October (through brief telephone interviews with some 20 of the 300 attendees who had been to the winter 2009/10 roadshows). Overall, the feedback was positive with attendees adopting better practices. Lessons had been learned regarding advertising and course content and these would be borne in mind for future events.

Progress with the BBKA Course in a Case and the NDB specific courses

19. Chris Deaves updated HEG on progress with the BBKA's Course in a Case which was being co-funded with Fera. The BBKA had issued 220 'white' cases of which more had been sold than had been issued free. It had been agreed to extend the 'free' period until Christmas and the scope of the 'other organisations' had increased.
20. There were some issues to resolve with the 'yellow' case (to be discussed at a meeting planned later that week including Richard Ball, Ivor Davis and Chris) but it was hoped it would go to the printers shortly. There had been a small number of advance orders and it was hoped to start shipments before Christmas. It was expected that fewer 'yellow' cases would be sold compared to the 'white' cases as the latter had been free due to the sponsorship received. The sale price of the yellow case would be £130/150 or £50 to associations.
21. The 'red' and 'green' cases were currently being prepared. It was hoped an early prototype of these would be available for the BBKA's ADM in March. No formal trialling had been undertaken as the BBKA had wanted to get some usable material out and then

obtain feedback. A condition of the supply was that full contact details of people using the case had to be provided to enable feedback to be obtained. This would provide evidence for possible future support. This feedback would be sought in mid-March and reported to Fera (as part of the contract) for the 'white' case and in August/September for the 'yellow' case.

22. Chris reported that progress with the video clips was a bit behind schedule but would be completed as soon as possible into the next season. The BBKA was in the process of rebuilding its website and this would have dedicated education pages where users of the Course in a Case could update the course material, including the new video clips when available. The Course in a Case would also be linked to an on-line education platform to improve accessibility.
23. Turning to the NDB's training courses on specific topics, Ken Basterfield reported good progress with the IPM, medication and the generic teaching modules. The honey bee nutrition module was on target. Five of the team were peer reviewing the content. They were on schedule to deliver the courses as per the contract and would provide the dates when ready.

Action: Ken Basterfield to send Kim/Liz the schedule for the courses between December and March when ready.

Workshop

24. Chris Deaves took the opportunity to run a workshop with HEG to consider and identify options for accreditation of training, with a focus on tutor accreditation. One of the deliverables in the BBKA's contract with Fera – the BBKA is required to develop a paper setting out options for accreditation of tutors and credits for students along with associated costs.
25. Chris Deaves led the discussion which included suggestions on simply relying on the BBKA exam system as an in-house accreditation system for trainers. Chris would summarise the points raised and produce an options paper which would be circulated to HEG as a draft.

Action: Chris Deaves to circulate a paper to HEG on options for accreditation

Future governance Phase 2

26. Fera was considering how best to bring Phase 1 to a close and to start off Phase 2 with the new governance arrangements. One option would be to bring all the working groups together to review Phase 1 of the Healthy Bees Plan before proceeding with Phase 2 and the new governance arrangements. HEG agreed that this made sense. The aim would be to meet at the end of February/beginning of March.

Action: Liz McIntosh to arrange final meeting of Phase 1 and forward look to Phase 2.

December 2010

