

Buzzword

Ayr and District Beekeepers Association Newsletter.



November/December 2014.

Inside: Kyle Academy Talks, Around the World, Life without Neonics., Pictures from an Exhibition, and more.



This is what November or December used to look like not so long ago. Temperatures this week are in the high teens and no sign of Jack Frost yet. I have spring crocuses sprouting in my garden. Should we be pleased? Our heating bills will no doubt be lower, and a good thing that is. However, queens are laying; bees are bringing in pollen and not clustering. This is probably a good thing too, as there will be strong hives going into the winter, but we will have to keep a keen eye on stores as, apart from Ivy, there is not much in the way of forage out there despite the balmy weather. Have other people seen as much **propolis** this year or is it only me? I could sell it for Scotland. Are we entering the era of all year round beekeeping? Interesting times for beekeeping.



KYLE ACADEMY TALKS

On 29th October, Ian Craig presented the assembled members of Ayr and District Beekeepers Association with a talk entitled “*Let the Bees Talk*” which is Ian’s observation of his bees over many years of beekeeping. As he explained, bees have been around for Millennia, and have developed many survival techniques therefore you can’t push them around in the direction they don’t want to go. Beekeepers must study the bees, nature and the weather.

What better place to start than the Hive Entrance e.g.

- *Spring*. Don’t be tempted to carry out too many manipulations. Beginners note.
- If you see small particles of wax – this is normal whereas large pieces could be the result of mice damage.
- Soiled alighting board? Could be Nosema or Dysentery. However the bees may cope with Nosema and the signs of Dysentery may not be Nosema but may be due to fermented stores.
- Chalk brood and Pollen pellets may be confused. Need to know the difference. Bees clear out old pollen pellets as the brood nest is expanding: this is a good sign. Chalk brood is usually caused by stress or wet summers. Feeding may help.
- If there are fewer flying bees seen than at neighbouring hives, it could be they are a different strain. If the same strain, hive should be checked.
- If bees are seen crawling – may be Acarine or Varroa. Look for “K” wings.

Into the Hive. Understand what is normal with regard to the Queen and the pattern of laying. Observe whether eggs laid normally within the cell e.g. one on bottom of each cell only. Sealed brood cappings: drone, pepperpot. How far laid out over frame. Should have stores sealed over top of brood nest. Too much brood without sufficient room for stores and they may starve.

Check for adequate winter stores. Require 40lbs. stores to overwinter.

Check colony strength.

Assume your bees will try to swarm and plan accordingly.

Do not cut out queen cells without checking firstly that you r queen/ eggs are o.k.
Ian prefers the cell he keeps to be sealed and 27mm length with a rough surface.
Supercedure cells usually on the periphery of the frame.
Emergency queen cell usually small and round.
Check if cells are hatched and only take action when the situation is understood.

When to give supers.

Put super on when bees on inner surface of outside frames of broodbox, and use drawn comb if possible. Add second super using the same principle i.e. when bees on inner surface of outside frame of the first super.

Giving Foundation.

Best given when in swarming situation as will draw comb more eagerly, or during a flow or when feeding. Can give foundation to expand brood nest or storage space.
If using single chamber with twelve Hoffmans in brood chamber (but not in supers), remove outer inferior frames and push to sunny side of hive and insert dummy board.
Double chamber with 8x8 frames for winter: move frames from BC2 to BC1 and insert 2 more frames of foundation into BC2.
Frame spacing: Ian prefers Hoffman frames in the brood chamber, spacers in the supers and castellations.

Queen rearing.

- Drones are not fertile till 13 days. The newly mated queen may not lay till the previous queen's brood hatch.
- If the queen is not mated within 3 weeks, she will not mate successfully. This could happen during a spell of bad weather.
- There is no point in requeening a laying worker or workers.
- Ian does not unite weak colonies in the spring. They are left to peter out or limp along until they can be requeened or assisted with extra bees.
- Don't bother stimulation feeding if they have enough food, it is a waste of time.

Apiary Site.

Not too many hives: 1x10K² is preferred.

Have sufficient forage, pollen, nectar and water. Monoculture not good e.g. exclusively oil seed rape.

Beehives can be a danger to humans or other animals.

Ease of access is desirable, but better out of public view.

Place in irregular pattern and consider the direction in which the hives are facing, it is better to have their backs to the wind.

Ian concluded by asking we learn to “read” our colonies and study the bees. What are they telling us? Go with the bees instincts. He recommended we avail ourselves of a book called “*Honey by the Ton*” by Oliver Field, which he has found most useful. (This book is now only available as a “used” copy from Amazon. I suspect it is aimed at the commercial beekeeper. If anyone would like me to buy a copy for the association library, please let me know by emailing me at www.bees5@btinternet.com Suzanne.)



Preparing honey for Showing.

Bill Clark was recently asked to give a talk about his method of preparing honey for show. At the same event Lindsay Baillie outlined her method of preparing wax for show.

Here are Bill’s “Hints and Tips for showing honey”

Firstly Jars and Lids:

Selection: Check jars for any blemishes or bubbles in glass. These can look like bubbles in your honey.

- Discard these – perfection is required.
- Similarly with lids – no scratches, dimples or rust, and they must be of the same design.
- Keep show glass and lids separate and protect from any damage which occur.

When your honey is harvested and ready for jarring:

Cleanliness:

- Wash jars under hot running water.
- Do not use washing up liquid as this can cause streaks in the glass.
- Do not use a drying cloth as this can result in fibre being deposited on inside of glass. These are invisible to the naked eye but will be detected by the judge using a magnifying glass.
- Air dry instead. Turn upside down onto a clean surface and can be left overnight.

LIDS: Place onto empty spare – not show – jar and screw back and forth a few times. This gets rid of any particles within the seal which could fall onto the top of your show honey.

Immediately prior to jarring, sterilize jars in oven at 200 F for 3-5 minutes, or microwave 2 minutes on full power.

The Honey Itself: Liquid Honey.

- The first thing to do is to select super frames which the bees are starting to fill around April – May time.
- Look at the honey colour in the cells just before they are capped.
- Mark the top of the frames to correspond to the colour you see e.g. L-light, M-medium and D-dark.
- You may find you can spin off three times depending on the colour the bees make. Medium honey usually comes first around April – May from Sycamore, Gorse or Willow. Dandelion will give a nice medium honey.
- Light honey I find, usually comes in at the end of June beginning of July.

- To obtain separate colours, spin off your honey as soon as it is capped, through a metal cone filter, then into a double mesh filter into a 30lb tub.

- Gently heat to approx. 40° Centigrade on a heat tray for approx. 1 hour

- Remove any scum (air bubbles) from top.
- Filter through 200 micron filter (obtainable from Thornes) into 30lb. Tubs with valve. Being heated, it should run through fairly quickly.
- As previously mentioned, show jars should be sterilized at 200F. Fill from the bottom of the bucket. Fill jars - 3 or 4 - right to the top and fit Cling Film, then lid and put past for *four weeks* at room temperature.

Laying down for Show.

After four weeks check for any scum (air bubbles) on top, and remove it with a teaspoon. Use one of the spare (of your 3 or 4) to top up to the top. Again fit cling film and lid and put past in cupboard at room temperature for *one week*. Check again for air bubbles. If clear fit *cling film and put past till four weeks before the show* at room temperature, and it should be ready for showing. If not, gently heat to clear. Use scales to make sure of the correct weight i.e. 454gms.

Creamed Honey or Soft Set.

Take one pound of nice fine set honey. Place the honey in a jug with 5lbs of your own honey and mix with a potato masher. When mixed evenly, pour into jars. Put into a cool room for about a week then check if set. You want it to be about the same as soft butter.

Fit lid and put past till show.

If put in fridge the night just before the show, it will have a nice shine on top. *Just what the judge is looking for.*

Heather Honey

Not a lot of preparation needed.

- Remove from frame.
- Press out using a fruit press then put in jar.

Heather Blend

- Mix 50/50 heather and blossom of your choice.
- Jar.
- Put past.

Cut Comb Honey in Box.

Put a couple of frames into your supers, either with thin unwired foundation, or starter strips and hope the bees will fill and cap them with some nice clean white cappings.

Just before the Show, remove the honey from the frames on a drain tray. Leave about ½ins. of wax at the top of frame. This will be a starter for the bees next year or at the heather if you go there.

You need to make a template to the size of the box into which your comb will be going. I find using the plastic lid of a margarine box such as Stork to be ideal. Make sure you have chosen a part of the comb which has neither holes in the cappings, nor any staining or propolis marks. Place your template on top of the comb to be cut out and cut exactly around. Don't forget to cut the corners to fit the box. Use a cake knife to lift and place your comb onto drain tray for twenty minutes to drain excess honey running from cells as the judge will downgrade you if comb is sitting in honey. Put on lid and sticker. Make sure it is the correct weight as indicated on show Schedule.

Chunk Honey

- As with cut comb, use template to size of jar.
- Cut template to underside of lid and full width of jar.
- Fit comb in jar.

- Fill with honey.

General.

Before doing anything read Rules and Regulations of current year's schedule to find out exactly what is required.

- Make sure weight is as schedule
- Liquid honey and heather honey ensure 454 g. **Use scales.**
- Ensure jars and lids are clean and matching. No scratches and no air bubbles in glass.
- Good luck!

Some winning exhibits.



On 7th October, Jim McCulloch, President of Helensborough Beekeeping association, gave a talk entitled “Bee Improvement, bee breeding and the Native bee.” This is an overview.

Jim keeps his bees on the Roseneath Peninsula on Peaton Hill Community Nature Reserve which is patrolled by the MOD. He began by explaining the global spread of bees:
Bees originated in Africa and eventually spread into Europe. The sub-species in the UK are the Italian, Craniolan, Caucasus and the Dark Bee.

- Morphometry: BIBBA has set ground rules for bee morphometry, conservation and improvement of natives.
- Why some bees aggressive: can be down to hybridisation. Aggression can be bred out by breeding out hybridity.

Sampling must be carried out to find out type of bee.

- 30-50 bees are an ideal number for sampling.
- Scan front right hand wing.
- Look at Cubital Index
- Discoidal Shift must be negative
- In 2007 samples taken at Roseneath were nearly all *Apis Mellifera Mellifera*. This was verified by BIBBA.
- Bee bodies also confirm *ApisMM* e.g. longish body hairs.

Why raise own Queens?

To change stock, breed out bad habits, young queens are more prolific, less likely to swarm or fail.

General Principles of Queen Rearing.

- Quality needed and sufficient equipment
- Understand timings and the need for sufficient mature drones. Queen not sexually mature till a few days after emergence and drones 10-12 + days.
- Methods: Artificial Swarm, Demaree, Swarm Board or Split.

Large Scale: Grafting, Cupkit or Jentner Cell.

Details of grafting included: suitable frames, selection of nucs/colonies, weather, forage and drones.

Manual grafting was explained.

Use of mini-nucs: Put in 250ml of nurse bees into Apodea box also queen cell for 3 days. Keep cool and dark, spray with water if thought necessary. Use fondant or dry sugar to feed as less messy.

On 4th day move to mating site. Open door on day 3 and close as soon as eggs/larvae seen. Remove mated queen as soon as possible and replace with cell or virgin.

Lots more information on BIBBA website.

Thanks to all speakers for giving their time and sharing their knowledge.



This interesting little article was in “The Irish Beekeeper” in July/August 2012. One of their members, Arthur Gillette, an elderly gentleman whose looks and demeanour belied his age, described his method of using **Propolis**.

1. Collect clean propolis by scraping off with a spoon (a knife can break up the propolis)
2. Place the propolis on the lid of a honey jar, put the lid on a radiator to make the propolis softer and more pliable.
3. Roll the propolis in the hand into pill size shapes (about the size of a match head).
4. Drop into a small, lidded container into which you have put icing sugar or caster sugar and shake to coat the pieces with the sugar. This will stop the pieces sticking together.

Dosage:

In the summer Arthur took 2/3 pieces per week. In winter – 1 piece per day. He advised, if you intend to go to crowded places, especially indoors, take one beforehand. Propolis can be bought from some health shops and from

beekeeping suppliers as a tincture of propolis. The tincture is superb for treating sore throats and warding off impending colds. Simply place several drops as far back in the throat as possible.

Far from being a cementing agent, propolis performs a number of valuable functions for the hive. Fungal infections can destroy a colony, as can bacterial ones, but propolis helps to prevent these infections and keeps the hive clean and sanitary. Simply by rubbing against the propolis, the bees help to protect themselves against infection from the external elements, and also help to spread the inhibitory qualities throughout the hive.

Greenspeak

Honey laundering.

How activists who are against GMOs in the food chain describe changes to the EU Honey Directive that allow GM pollen to slip under the radar.

The Observer Magazine 9.11.14



GM crops needed.

GM technology should be one of the technologies available to plant breeders to help feed the world according to molecular biologist Prof John Bryant, emeritus professor at Exeter University.

Prof Bryant told delegates it was important for plant breeders to increase the nutritional quality of the crop, make crops more resistant to pests and diseases and to increase the crop robustness to environmental stress. GM crops are currently grown in 28 countries covering 170 million commercial hectares of mainly cotton, soybean, maize and *oilseed rape*, and there has not been one single instance of any problems caused to consumers. Opposition from Greenpeace remained high, even though GM crops had the potential to help human health. He spoke of GM Golden Rice, which had been bred to provide additional Vitamin A to help combat blindness in S.E. Asia. He said “this has encountered opposition every step of the way since being bred in 1998 and is still not on the market.” His comments come against a backdrop of recent research which showed yield trends were insufficient to double global crop production by 2050. (Farmers Guardian 12.9.14 Extract)

MEASURES NEEDED TO INCREASE BEE HEALTH AND FARM BIODIVERSITY.

Bee health is vitally important to plant breeders, but the ban on neonicotinoids by the European Commission is disappointing, Syngenta's principal scientific adviser Dr. Mike Bushell told the conference.

Dr Bushell said neonicotinoids were only eighth on the EC table for reasons for the decline in the bee population and the ban was imposed for political reasons. Dr Bushell argued Syngenta was one of the world's biggest bee customers and wanted to see healthy bees. Research by the company had shown bees flourished when the crop was in bloom but then had to work extremely hard to survive due to lack of alternative forage sources on farms.

This showed the importance of farmers establishing and monitoring essential wildflower habitats, which would increase overall farm biodiversity alongside a high yielding crop, he added.

Syngenta's Operation Pollinator advice has been disseminated to 16 different countries and the company spends \$1.5billion globally on research and development.

Devon dairy farmer and cheesemaker Mary Quicke said she was concerned most of the country's agronomists were funded by agro-chemical companies, questioning whether this would be tolerated if all doctors were funded by pharmaceutical companies.

Farmers Guardian 12.9.14 (Extract)



FIRST AUTUMN WITHOUT NEONICOTINOIDS PROVES A CHALLENGE FOR OSR GROWERS.

Early reports of cabbage stem flea beetle damage in crops suggest the first autumn without neonicotinoid seed treatment is proving a challenge for OSR growers.

With OSR drilling complete in many areas of the South and East in particular and crops emerging well, warm temperatures for most of the UK, saw a flurry of flea beetle activity, with growers walking crops to check the extent of the damage. In Essex, farm manager is growing 272 acres of oilseed rape this season. He says "I looked at crops at the beginning of the week and damage from the beetle was affecting about 10 per cent of the crop. By mid-week it was closer to 50per cent.

With resistance to pyrethroids confirmed last month in UK flea beetle population, resistance development is a concern. Farmers are advised to be extra vigilant and at first signs of damage growers need to go and spray with insecticides. Former NFU president Peter Kendall said flea beetle was "decimating" oilseed rape on his Bedfordshire farm, "We've lost over 20per cent, he said.

Georgina Haigh. The Farmers Guardian 12 9 14 (Extract)



School bee project wins WWF award.

Greenbrae Primary School, in Bridge of Don, Aberdeenshire are the winners of WWF Scotland's search to find the best green community idea with a top prize of £2,000 to help bring their idea to life. Its honey bee project will educate pupils and the community on protecting the UK's bee population. The school has bought a bee hive and bees sited at a farm.

The Herald 10.11.14.



Around the World.

Canada.

BEEKEEPERS SUE NEONIC MANUFACTURERS.

Canadian beekeepers are suing the makers of neonicotinoid pesticides for CAD\$400m (£222m) in damages, claiming they are responsible for a decline in bee health.

Two of Ontario's biggest honey producers Sun Parlor Honey and Munro Honey, submitted the lawsuit on behalf of Canadian beekeepers to Ontario Superior Court earlier this month.

London law firm Siskinds LLP filed the claim to recover damages allegedly suffered by beekeepers over the widespread use of neonic pesticides.

Beekeepers are claiming damages to cover losses and punitive damages (£27m) from pesticide manufactures Bayer CropScience and Syngenta, dating from as far back as 2006, specifically from products containing the active ingredients imidacloprid, clothiadin and thiomethoxam.

The beekeepers claim that Bayer and Syngenta were negligent in their manufacture, sale and distribution of neonics in Ontario, causing beekeepers to suffer significant losses and damages.

The EC suspended the use of neonics in December on crops considered dangerous to bee health, such as OSR for a two year period.

Bayer and Syngenta say the risk to bee health from these products is low if they are used according to their labels. They blame loss of habitat, and varroa as the main culprits in bee losses.

Last month Bayer published research showing European bees were much healthier than recent media publications suggest.

Farmers Weekly 12.9.14 (Extract)

America.

On June 20, 2014, President Obama issued a directive to federal agencies to create a federal strategy to promote honey bee and other pollinator health. The President's leadership could not come at a more critical time. Commercial beekeepers across the country experienced extremely high colony losses this past winter, and their hives have yet to recover to full strength as they now continue to pollinate a multitude of crops around the country. Native pollinators, such as bumblebees, have also suffered alarming population declines, and two species now have petitions pending for protection under the Endangered Species Act. There are currently over 40 pollinator species Federally-listed as threatened or endangered, and most recently, the iconic monarch butterfly has declined by 90 percent.

Among other things, the President's directive charged federal agencies to expand efforts to reverse pollinator losses. Under the directive, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is charged with assessing the effect of pesticides, predominantly neonicotinoids, on bee and other pollinator health and taking action, as appropriate, to protect pollinators. As your agency begins this process, we encourage you to consider the following developments.

Recent findings from the International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Task Force on Systemic Insecticides, which reviewed over 800 peer-reviewed published journal articles over the past two decades, determined the systemic pesticides – including neonicotinoids –

are accumulating in soils and polluting waterways and natural vegetation across the world, leading to widespread impacts on wildlife inhabiting farmland and aquatic habitats. The Task Force also found growing evidence that much of their use as seed treatment is unnecessary and ineffective. Research has also shown steep declines in the abundance and distribution of one third of all North American bumblebee species, and surveys of winter habitat in Mexico show that the monarch butterfly has declined 90% from almost a billion butterflies in the early 1900s. Studies have indicated adverse impacts of pesticides to many native pollinator species – these risks must be curbed before more species approach extinction. Most recently, research published in the journal *Nature* showed that the most severe bird population declines occurred in those areas where neonicotinoid pollution was highest. Starling, tree sparrows,

and swallows were among the most affected. In response to this growing body of information, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) announced it plans to phase out use of neonicotinoids in all National Wildlife Refuges by 2016. In making its decision, FWS noted. "We have determined that prophylactic use, such as a seed treatment, of the neonicotinoid pesticides that can distribute systematically in a plant and can potentially affect a broad spectrum of non-target species is not consistent with Service policy. We make this decision based on a precautionary approach to our wildlife management practices and not on agricultural practices." FWS's decision marks a significant move in the right direction as the first U.S. agency to restrict use of neonicotinoids. We encourage you to follow the lead of FWS and respond to this troubling situation swiftly and effectively.

Australia.

Honey Bees in trouble.

Australia's European honey bees (*Apis mellifera*) are at risk of breeding themselves into extinction by mating with the invading Asian honey bees (*Apis cerana*). The Western Australia Farmers' Federation says beekeepers are being warned about the risk of unnatural matings with a new study showing honey production and pollination services could be at risk due to the presence of Asian honey bees in Queensland. The mating makes the European bees' eggs unviable and as the Asian honeybee becomes more widespread, the inter-specific mating will increase, resulting in fewer and less worker bees. The Australian Rural Industries Research and Development Corp (RIRDC) says Prof. Ben Oldroyd and Dr. Emily Remnant of the University of Sydney conducted the research into the impact if the two species mate after the Asian honey bee became established around Cairns in 2007. The research found queens and drones of the two species often meet and mate as they fly at similar times and places. Genetic testing using DNA markers showed the presence of Asian honey bee sperm in the sperm storage organs of one third of the Australian commercial queens sampled in Cairns.

The mating is only one way with beekeepers saying Asian honeybee queens can die if they mate with the European honeybee drones, because they're much larger. In a report for the RIRDC, Oldroyd and Remnant say previous studies in Japan showed that if there are no other males to mate with, *A. mellifera* queens will mate with *A. cerana* drones. "After such matings eggs either fail to hatch, hatch into drones, or, rarely, into female clonal offspring of the queen," they say. "Drones of both species fly at similar times of day, so there is opportunity for queens and drones of different species to meet and mate."

Researchers developed DNA tests to determine if they could find *A. cerana* sperm in the spermathecae of *A. mellifera* queens and *A. mellifera* sperm in the spermathecae of *A. cerana* queens. They tested 12 *A. mellifera* queens from Cairns and found four had mated with one or more *A. cerana* males. A test of 22 *A. cerana* queens found none had mated with *A. mellifera* drones. The researchers tested 213 eggs from three naturally mated queens in the

Cairns area with their DNA test. The three queens all had *A. cerana* sperm in their spermatheca, but the researchers did not detect any hybrid eggs and say this led them to assume that hybrid eggs do not hatch and are removed by nurse workers. They also used artificial insemination to cross five *A. mellifera* queens with sperm collected from *A. cerana* drones. They tested the eggs of these queens with the DNA test. One queen produced heterospecific eggs. One queen produced a thelytokous worker. That is, the egg fertilized itself and produced a copy of the queen's genotype.

"Thelytoky is a potential major worry for the industry," the report says. "In South Africa there is a thelytokous strain of honey bee called *A. melliferacapensis*. Workers of this strain enter production hives and parasitize them with their eggs. These workers never do any work, so the host colony quickly collapses and dies." Honey Bee and Pollination Program advisory committee chairman Dr. Michael Hornitzky says both commercial and hobby beekeepers are on the front line of biosecurity and need to be aware of possible threats to bees, such as interspecies mating, as well as best practise management and control methods.

"Australia's European honey bee colonies will become increasingly at risk of collapse if mating with Asian honey bees becomes a regular occurrence," Hornitzky says.

"Depending on the proportion of Asian and European honey bee males that mate with the queen, her fertility will be reduced and her eggs will not hatch, reducing the productivity of colonies headed by European honey bee queens that mate in areas where Asian honey bees are present." Hornitzky says this in turn could lead to bees being less effective at honey production and pollination.

"We know that in Australia approximately 65% of horticulture and agricultural crops produced require pollination services from honey bees, so this is a key concern, especially as it will impact feral bee colonies as well as managed hives," he says. "This important research serves as a warning to beekeepers that it's better to source queens only from areas where Asian honey bees are not present. "We should do everything we can do to stop the spread of Asian honey bees south into Australia's major queen breeding areas," Hornitzky says. Australian Honeybee Industry Council executive director Trevor Weatherhead says the industry expected inter-specific breeding and the council wants the Queensland government to set up a control area in the north of the state to protect domestic and international bee markets. "We've been proposing that we have either a control area or biosecurity zone ... so that bees in that northern area wouldn't be able to come south without a permit," he tells the Australian Broadcasting Corp. Cairns beekeeper Maurie Damon's bees were involved in the research, tells the broadcaster the findings are concerning but not critical. He hasn't noticed any major impact and the queens, who mate with multiple drones, are still productive enough, and the reject eggs become a food source.

"The workers... pick up immediately that the eggs that are hybrids... are not right... so they (eat) them as a protein source," he says.

Catch the Buzz Nov., 2014

Italy.

Scary news from Italy and Sicily, where Small hive beetle has been discovered. In an attempt to stop this devastating pest reaching our shores Bill Rintoul has set up a website asking for as many signatures as possible in order to urge the government to impose an import ban on all bees coming in from Italy. To sign the petition go to:

<https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/stop-the-small-hive-beetle-spreading-to-britain>

Bill also urged members to contact their local M.P. for support in imposing a ban on imports from Italy.

United Kingdom.

The UK government launches a new strategy to support bees and other pollinators.

The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) says organizations such as Network Rail, Highways Agency and the National Trust which manage more than 800,000 hectares of land in England have signed up to the National Pollinator Strategy, and pledged to take actions such as planting more bee-friendly wild flowers and allowing grass to grow longer.

Environment Secretary Elizabeth Truss says it's estimated the value of insects pollinating crops and plants amounts to hundreds of millions of pounds.

"That's why we are doing everything we can to help them thrive," Truss says. "Not everyone can become a beekeeper, but everyone from major landowners to window-box gardeners can play their part in boosting pollinators."

Defra is setting up bee hives on the roof of their building in London and supermarkets including Waitrose and The Coop have been distributing bee-friendly flower seeds to their customers.

Motorway verges, railway embankments and forests will be used to create bee and insect friendly paradises as part of the major new strategy to protect the 1,500 species of pollinators in England.

Catch the Buzz Nov.,2014.

More winners at the 2014 Ayr Flower Show.



Congratulations to everyone who was successful, and well done to all who took part.



AGM. This was held on 19.11.14. in Kyle Academy where 18 members attended.

Changes to committee: Joyce Duncan stepped down as President, to be replaced by Allan Foster. Julyan Stanley is now Vice-President. Other members were elected to replace those whose terms of office have expired. Previous minutes, Treasurer's and Secretary's reports were ratified. Corrections were made as required.



I have decided the time has come for me to retire from Buzzword. I feel someone with a fresh approach to content and layout would be beneficial to Buzzword and its readership. Many thanks to all those who have, by taking the time to send in your articles and ideas, supported Buzzword over the years. Everyone, myself included and probably many beginners, have benefited from the practical advice and words of wisdom offered by the old hands who contributed to Buzzword. I sincerely hope they will continue to do so in the future.

Thanks to Lindsay for distributing Buzzword to all over the years.

If there is anyone out there who feels they would like to have a bash, please let someone on the committee know, or email me at:

www.bees5@btinternet.com. Only basic computer skills required.

A Very Merry Christmas to everyone, and best wishes for a Happy Beekeeping New Year.

Suzanne.

