



Trustees' Report

Mount Edgcumbe Cornish Bee Group
Registered Charity No. 1177943
1st September 2022 - 31st August 2023

Introduction

This fifth Annual Report to the Charity Commission covers an intense period of activity. Having received the grant of £9,200 from the National Lottery Awards for All England in the spring of 2022, the improvements outlined in the bid had to be completed by May 2023. This meant any outdoor work had to be carried out over the winter when the bees weren't flying. Also, any work directly affecting the colonies, had to be managed carefully so as not to cause undue stress which could hinder their development and lower their resilience.

These goals were largely met, resulting in an enlargement and upgrading of the beekeepers' work area, establishment of a new 'nursery' area for young colonies, and an enhancing of the Visitors' Viewing Area. The Nursery Garden now adjoins the main apiary which reduces time spent in travelling to the previous mating site. In addition, it makes it much easier to access equipment and stores, and to liaise with other beekeepers on the main site.

Conservation of the Native Honey Bee

During the preparation of the new mating apiary over the winter, a number of colonies were kindly fostered by volunteers. These were assessed in the spring and either re-homed or absorbed into the main apiary. Reviewing all the stock, it was decided that the colonies had improved enough to persevere with the existing breeding lines without bringing in any new genetic strains.

This year, colony increase was largely due to making splits. The warm spring and consistent nectar flow meant the colonies expanded at a quicker rate than expected so the team took advantage of the high population numbers and production of swarm cells to create nucs. The fair weather continued into the summer, leading to a good percentage of successful open mating and production of an encouraging honey crop.

Education and Community Engagement

The continued monitoring of each main colony's Varroa mite drop provided interesting information about their state of development and health. This led to much debate on how to use this data to guide decisions on whether to apply treatment or not - and, if treatment was deemed necessary, which kind to choose. The group's findings, together with international research and expert views, presented a very mixed picture. While no clear conclusions were made, the Varroa Monitoring Project and general discussions have proved very educative.

The £9,200 grant from National Lottery Awards for All England was maximised by careful spending on new materials and recycling materials where possible. The majority of the improvement work was carried out by volunteers, with professionals brought in for specialised work such as electricity, internet connection, plumbing and

drainage. A bonus from this project is the expansion of our local network to include skilled trades people and non-beekeeper volunteers.

In February 2023 the MtECBG hosted a visit requested by B4, an organisation that promotes the native dark honey bee through sustainable beekeeping. The group included Directors of B4 CIC, associated academics and media contacts. The visit enabled all parties to have a better understanding of overlapping interests and how collaborative working could be of mutual benefit. These links have been pursued in the period covered by this report with longer term outcomes anticipated.

As well as new partnerships being forged, stronger links have been developed with Liskeard Beekeepers who are members of the Cornwall Beekeeping Association and the BBKA. Beginner and Improver beekeepers were welcomed to join in the activities at the Mt Edgcumbe Apiary; by extending their beekeeping experiences, a greater understanding of beekeeping issues and skills was gained by both sides.

Pollination

The National Lottery grant included a budget for improving information displays in the Public Viewing Area to encourage awareness of native pollinators and ways of helping them thrive. It also enabled the purchase of wild flower meadow seeds which were planted in the Mt Edgcumbe Park Grounds.

One of the Directors of B4 had introduced the MtECBG Trustees to the iNaturalist app which can be used as part of a 'BioBlitz' project. The app was subsequently used to set up a data base to record flowering plants and insect pollinators in the wider parkland. This is the first step to establishing forage availability and therefore work out the best ways to support our honey bees and other native pollinators in the Mt Edgcumbe area.

Funds

Very little new equipment was needed to be purchased during this report period. An inventory showed that sufficient kit had been built up over the last 4 years to maintain the activity level forecast.

Consumables such as wax foundation sheets, medicinal treatments and feed were still needed. The arrangement with Tesco to collect free sugar from damaged bags was becoming unsustainable so it was transferred to a local bee farmer. In return he has agreed that, when he converts it into syrup feed he will meet MtECBG needs for no cost.

During the summer the apiary was visited by representatives from Songbird Naturals Ltd. This Somerset-based company produces a natural beeswax-based massage medium as an alternative to water-based oils and lotions. The original hope was that MtECBG could supply Songbird with native honey bee wax, but it soon became clear that it would not be possible to produce the quantities required. Having been impressed by the shared ethical approaches, however, the company decided to sponsor MtECBG by donating £100 on a monthly basis. This started in June 2023.

Conclusion

The year 2022-2023 has been a very varied and demanding one for the charity but the Trustees and Volunteers have risen to the challenge. Stronger foundations have been established for the MtECBG and progress has been made on all aspects of our charitable objective.



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Mount Edgcumbe Cornish Bee Group

1177493

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

Period start date
01-Sep-22

To

Period end date
31-Aug-23

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations	540	-	-	540	2,830
Sponsors	300	-	-	300	-
Apiary Sales	1,896	-	-	1,896	-
Grant	-	-	-	-	9,200
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	2,736	-	-	2,736	12,030
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	2,736	-	-	2,736	12,030
A3 Payments					
Apiary Equipment	52	-	-	52	1,236
Apiary Consumables	212	-	-	212	1,666
Apiary Improvements	-	7,673	-	7,673	-
Apiary Maintenance	-	-	-	-	43
Education	-	-	-	-	23
Refreshments	-	-	-	-	20
Parking	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	264	7,673	-	7,937	2,988
A4 Asset and investment purchases. (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	264	7,673	-	7,937	2,988
Net of receipts/(payments)	2,472	- 7,673	-	- 5,201	9,042
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	4,078	9,200	-	13,278	-
Cash funds this year end	6,550	1,527	-	8,077	9,042

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Bank	5,245	1,527	-
	Bank	1,272	-	-
	Cash	33	-	-
	Total cash funds	6,550	1,527	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
	John Chadwick	John Chadwick	31-Jul-24	