

GUILDFORD DIVISION – SUMMARY CHAIRMAN’S REPORT 2017

2017, began with a clean-up day, flaming boxes and boiling frames refreshed with coffee and mulled wine. We also had a successful beginners course introducing 20 plus people to the joy of beekeeping, we have taken over the other half of the barn and hope to use it next year to extract the division’s honey. We will need to insulate and line this end of the barn and make it bee proof as we do not want to be joined by bees and wasps while extracting as we were three years ago. We will need to add some more power points and move the freezers to this end of the barn to make more storage room in the first half for much of the equipment which is currently stacked behind the barn, this area needs to be cleaned of bee equipment as Birtley need it for their own equipment. We are very grateful to Birtley House for continuing to allow us to keep our bees in the Orchard and Garden allowing us to run our successful beekeeping courses and produce honey to sell to Birtley House.

At present we have 13 colonies in our apiaries and hope to keep it to this number. A new initiative in the apiary is to provide 2 crown boards for each colony to make inspection easier, this idea was picked up at an NDB short course which I attended in the summer. We also intend to paint the edges of all our framed queen excluders red, to make it easier to spot where the queen excluders are, definitely helpful if queen excluders have been placed between the floor and brood box when doing an artificial swarm or shook swarm. We also plan to paint with smooth masonry paint all the poly Nucs to protect them from the sun and weather.

Next year we intend to run a short course to enable more of our members to take their Basic, a practical exam run at the apiary on the division’s bees. This exam helps to confirm that you know how to keep bees and allows you to take module exams should you so wish.

Chairman: Jane Hall

Date: November 2017