



The Environment and Ecology Forum

Meeting: Thursday, 5th March 2015 at 6.00 pm hours
North Warehouse

Membership:	Cllrs. Bhaimia, Brown, Field, Lewis and Porter
Contact:	Stephen McDonnell 01452 396209

AGENDA

1.	APOLOGIES
2.	CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME (Pages 5 - 6) Letter from the Chairman, Richard Trelfa.
3.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST Members and Officers are reminded that at the start of the meeting they should declare any known interest in any matter to be considered, and also during the meeting if it becomes apparent that they have an interest in the matters being discussed.
4.	MINUTES (Pages 7 - 24)
5.	PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (MAXIMUM 15 MINUTES)
6.	PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (MAXIMUM 10 MINUTES)
7.	GLOUCESTERSHIRE CYCLING STRATEGY/CONSULTATION ON GLOUCESTERSHIRE TRANSPORT PLAN

	Thomas Evans, Local Sustainable Transport Fund Programme Manager, Gloucestershire Highways.
8.	STAGECOACH - A BUS OPERATOR'S APPROACH Ray Pass from Stagecoach.
9.	COMMUNITY APIARY (Pages 25 - 28) Proposal for a community apiary.
10.	INFORMATION EXCHANGE
11.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING Thursday 2 nd July 2015 at 18.00 hours.

Our Ref: SMD

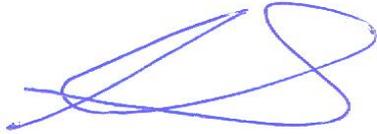
16th February 2015

Dear E&E Member

**Environment and Ecology Forum Meeting
18:00 on 5th March 2015 Gloucester**

Please find attached your papers for the next meeting. For the March meeting we are going to address one of the major environmental problems facing Gloucester City Transport. Following on from the discussion at the January meeting we have invited Thomas Evans from Gloucestershire Highways to speak about the emerging Cycling Strategy he will also talk about the Transport Plan Consultation which is currently underway. We have also invited Ray Pass from Stagecoach to give a bus operators view . It promises to be an interesting discussion.

Yours sincerely



pp Richard Trelfa
(Independent Chair of the City Council's
Environment and Ecology Forum)

REGENERATION DIRECTORATE

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GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY FORUM MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 15TH January 2015.

<u>Present:</u>	Richard Trelfa (Chair)	- Hempsted Residents Association
	Stephen McDonnell (Sec)	- Environmental Co-ordinator, Gloucester City Council
	Meyrick Brentnall	- Environmental Planning Manager, Gloucester City Council
	Barry Leach	- Gloucester City Centre Community Partnership
	Cllr Jim Porter	- Cabinet Member for Environment
	Audrey Fielding	- Glos Federation of Women's Institutes
	Cllr David Brown	- Gloucester City Council
	Cllr Usman Bhaimia	- Gloucester City Council
	Brian Furnis	- Resident
	Ray Pass	- Stagecoach in Gloucester
	Claire Mitchell	- Vision 21
	Anthony Perry	- Environment Agency
	Jo Martin	- Environment Agency
	Norman Nutall	- Hempsted Resident
	David Lesser	- Gloucester Resident
	Mathew Panon	- Gloucestershire County Council
	Kate Cole	- Gloucestershire Joint Waste Team
	Robert Burns	- Tuffley Resident
	Jean Burns	- Tuffley Resident
	Wayne Best	- Gloucester City Council
	Pam Daw	- Castlemeads Court Residents/Friends of Alney Island.
	Richard Graham	- Member of Parliament for Gloucester

<u>Apologies:</u>	Cllr Lewis	- Gloucester City Council
	Jenny Powell	- Stagecoach
	Cllr Field	- Gloucester City Council
	Gordon Heath	- Resident
	Graham Stanley	- Glos Minibus Scheme
	Margaret Day	- Friends of Robinswood Hill
	Dawn Fearn	- Gloucester City Council
	Jackie Cave	- Friends of Robinswood Hill
	Penny Clewer	- Transition Gloucester
	Andrew Harley (Vice Chair)	- Gloucester City Homes Tenants Forum

ACTION

1. Minutes of previous meeting 4th December 2014 were agreed.

2. **Matters Arising**

BL asked with reference to the item on the Public Open Space Strategy.

What had happened to the proposals on the redesign of the Westgate Leisure Park, and also the proposals to redesign Alney Island in terms of improved access and amenity?

MB responded to say that a planning application for the Westgate Leisure Park would be submitted shortly and the application for the GETCO grant for the Alney Island improvements had been submitted last week.

3. **Flooding in Gloucester** – Richard Trelfa started the discussion off by circulating a letter from a Mr Lake which had been published in the Citizen Newspaper an attached picture showed flood water around Hempsted Landfill.

RT then introduced Jo Martin from the Environment Agency who gave a presentation on the work that the Agency does with a particular focus on what work is being done to reduce the impacts of flooding in the River Severn flood plain.

A copy of the presentation will be circulated with the minutes,

Jo explained how the flood plain worked and showed maps with flood water spread and topography which are used in modelling likely flood impacts. Measures are then built to hold back or redirect flood water where there is a cost benefit. She illustrated this with examples. Each year £340,000 was spent on maintenance of defences and £70,000 on flood warning.

With reference to Corn Ham and Mr Lakes letter she said, further detailed modelling was currently being done that was looking at this and other areas and a report on the findings of this work would be available in the near future. This report would inform the way the Environment Agency responded and would help in deciding which new flood defence or removal of barriers to water flow would be most beneficial. Jo stressed that all works were subject to cost evaluation and unless a source of funding could be found new measures could not be built nor existing barriers to flow removed. She highlighted how a regeneration scheme in Derby on the River Derwent had enabled improvements to be made as a result of developer contributions. At Alney Island the old railway sidings had been removed to improve flows of flood water using this funding route after the new road was built.

RT asked for clarification would there be more frequent flooding of agricultural land and were increases in rainfall and sea level rises the result of climate change. Jo said yes this is what expert scientists were advising.

RT said Mr Lakes letter suggested that Gloucester Tip had changed the flow rates within the flood plain RT wanted to know if removing obstructions such as levees at Corn Ham would improve flows across the flood plain.

JM said it might but that could have other impacts elsewhere which was why they were modelling different scenarios.

RT asked would tidal factors make a difference and should the Severn Barrage be built. He also asked about the value of dredging the Severn. AP responded saying that it was possible that if a barrage were built this would reduce tidal flows, but this would not stop fluvial flows, he also felt dredging was not the answer as the River Severn was not a slow enough water course for this to be effective.

DB asked could areas identified as a flood risk in Gloucester be improved by developer funding as with the Docks railway sidings.

NN asked a question about the Internal Drainage Boards under which land owners pay a precept to have water courses kept clear and drainage maintained.

JP said he was on the local IDB and would be happy to take up any points raised at the next meeting with the board. He did point out that both the areas mentioned were not waterways covered by the board.

JP had visited a local flood plain consultation meeting in December and wanted to know when the results would be made public, particularly in relation to raising the height of the Alney Terrace defences.

RG asked where do we go next, with regard to flooding at Alney Terrace, he acknowledged that some good work had been done, from both the Environment Agency, Severn Trent Water, Gloucester City and County Councils. He was looking forward to the publication of the modelling report however in the mean time risk had been reduced and everyone could take some real positives from the story so far.

WB said going forward it would be good to identify some quick wins as clearly Gloucester was going to grow,

There was a discussion about land management and how water could run off fields used for arable crops quicker than land used for traditional grazing.

RT asked about various sumps and large construction projects that had been built at Westgate and Hempsted,

AP said these were built by Severn Trent Water a statutory undertaker to control storm water flows and sewerage flows in times of flood, he felt sure that they could send a spokesperson to a future meeting to explain these measures in more detail, Tim Smith was the local contact for these matters.

RG invited all present to congratulate AP on receiving his MBE.

4. **Robert Burns Letter**

Robert was invited to speak to his letter which had been circulated in relation to his proposals to build two new water parks to reduce flood risk in Gloucester. He gave examples of a number of schemes around the country where similar schemes had been developed such as the Cotswold Water Park. He felt the potential for amenity, tourism, and economic development was massive if he could get his project off the ground. He requested the establishment of a working party to examine his proposals in more detail.

MB

BF felt the forum would be persuaded if a site visit to the area were organised using a double decker bus. There was a need to get a project leader and a champion he felt the EA and ministers should be involved.

MB said in the context of the Joint Core Strategy (Planning Policy) it was unlikely that the project could be developed due to the land ownership, cross boundary considerations and environmental constraints. He also said that councils current Planning Policy's were working towards an examination in public so therefore not likely to be subject to significant change.

RG suggested the project should be submitted to the Gloucestershire County Council minerals group also Stroud district Council if these bodies felt it was viable it could be taken forward. There was then a further discussion about various aspects of the proposal, river deltas and various theories' about the benefits of the scheme and others in Holland.

It was agreed that the County minerals group would be the main action for the proposal MB agreed to pass Mr Burns proposals on to this group for a response.
Action MB

5. **Alney Island**

MB gave an update on Alney island which is managed as a nature reserve by the City Council. He explained that the land was grazed by a herd of traditional Gloucestershire Cattle that were very tough and did not mind getting wet.

ACTION

6. **Topics for future meetings**
Topic for next meeting would be a transport theme with an update on Elmbridge Major transport scheme and Gloucestershire Cycling strategy, with contributions from Stagecoach and Gloucestershire Highways. Action SM

SM

7. **Date of Next Meeting**

5th March 18.00hrs

Managing flood risk in Gloucester

Presentation by Jo Martin
Flood Risk Management Team Leader

- Background
- Role of the Environment Agency
- Managing flood risk from River Severn in Gloucester area
- Modelling of scenarios to reduce flood risk
- Next steps and way forward
- Questions and discussion

Protecting properties in 2012 and 2014



Alney Island 2014



Horsbere Brook Flood Storage Area 2012



Daniels Brook 2012



Deerhurst 2012

River Severn at Gloucester Flood Risk Management Study 2005



River Severn at Gloucester Flood Risk Management Study

Revision A04

December 2005



JB Ref: 12191

Environment Agency
Midlands Region
Olton Court
10 Warwick Road, Olton, Birmingham, B92 7HX

Telephone - 08708 506 506

Impact of infrastructure on Alney Island in 2000 flood



Dock Branch Railway sidings



Removal of floodplain obstructions on Alney Island



- 2003/2004 Gloucestershire County Council removed a sizeable portion of redundant Dock Branch Railway
- 2005 Environment Agency purchased remaining section of Dock Branch Railway from Network Rail. Negotiated with British Waterways that they create two major channels through embankment. Channels created 2006.
- 2004-2006 Environment Agency carried out other projects in Gloucester area to facilitate flow and protect properties

Channel created through Dock Branch Railway 2006

Removal of floodplain obstructions on Alney Island



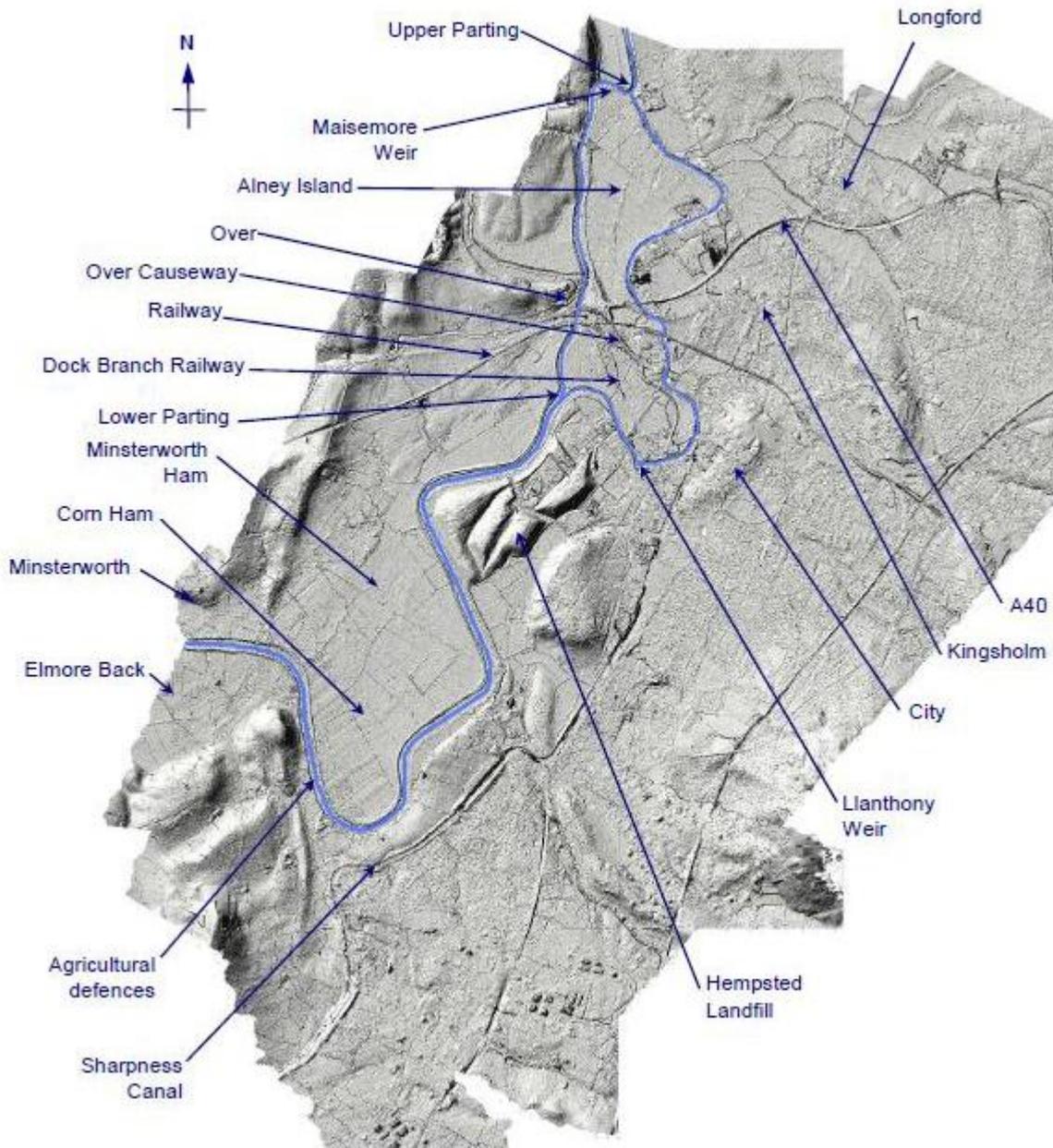
Removal of Dock Branch Railway helps to convey flood water across Alney Island in 2014

Channels through Dock Branch Railway sidings





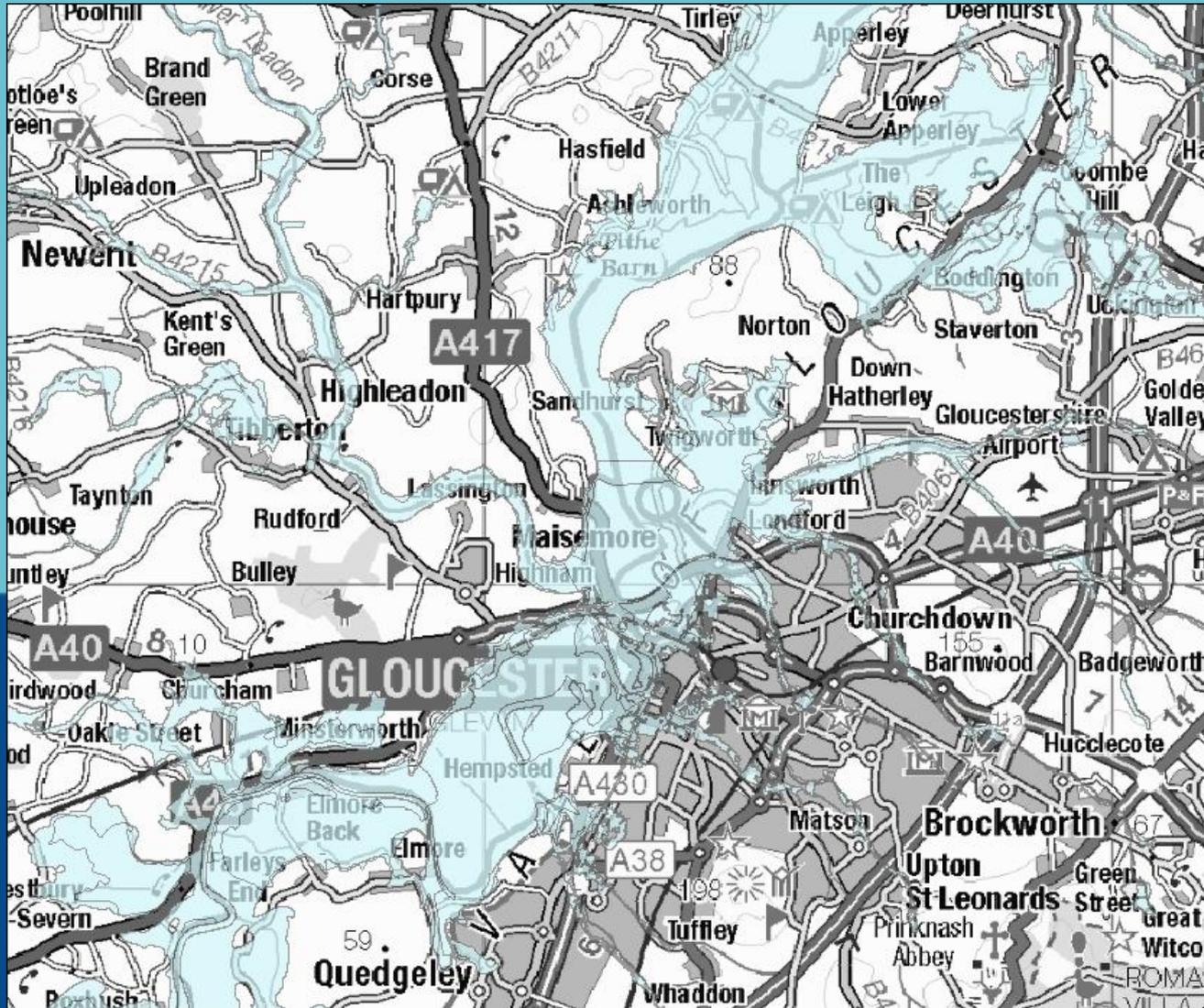
Corn Ham



Way forward – strategic approach?

Any Questions?

Discussion



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March 3rd 2015



The Chairman
Environment and Ecology Forum
Herbert Warehouse
The Docks
Gloucester
GL1 2EQ

Dear Mr. Trelfa,

I am writing to seek support for a low-cost community project that I think will benefit both the residents of Gloucester and also the local environment. While not wishing to overwhelm anyone with details at this stage, I hope you will give the following outline your consideration.

[The proposal](#)

My proposal is to establish a community apiary, based on the experience I have gained with community farms and apiaries in Australia. A community apiary is a resource for an urban community, designed for education, participation, and development of practical skills. All participation is voluntary and unpaid.

[The concept](#)

A community apiary is a public site where beehives are placed and where the community is encouraged to participate in their management, under supervision. It would be provisioned with bees and equipment and managed by volunteer beekeepers, initially myself. Once established, the apiary will regularly be open to any member of the public for a casual visit, or for a longer-term relationship.

Visitors will experience beekeeping as observers or 'hands-on' as they prefer. Regular visitors will learn beekeeping through practical experience, mentoring and discussion. Those who wish to become more involved can themselves assist with running the apiary or can add hives (within the capacity of the site).

[Community benefits](#)

Experience – my own and more generally – suggests these are numerous, going beyond education and interest towards building communities, providing purpose and focus and even therapy. Some of these themes are explored in the links provided below.

What is requested from Gloucester?

- Assistance in locating a site or sites meeting the requirements outlined below.
- Any necessary modification, such as fencing or screening etc, if this is required.
- Assistance in meeting any public health and safety requirements
- Desirable but optional would be provision of a small storage shed; access to a covered area for meetings post-session, during winter, during bad weather or for instruction; assistance with purchasing extra protective clothing.

What does Gloucester gain?

- Some substance behind its 'bee-friendly' messages.
- Genuine community enrichment and engagement.
- Demonstrating the ability to turn unused land to a useful community purpose.
- Some good PR. Similar schemes elsewhere have been well-received and widely reported. Any honey from community apiaries would be labelled as coming from the scheme, eg 'Gloucester Community Apiary', rather than be sold under the beekeeper's own label. The apiary also has an opportunity to forge links with 'Bees Abroad', allowing Gloucester to be visible as a supporter of subsistence projects in Africa.

Site requirements

- An apiary can be placed anywhere there is forage for bees available in the vicinity. Bees forage widely and the site itself need not be anything special. Rough or 'brown' sites are often fine and I ran one apiary on an old landfill cap. Public buildings with unused gardens, or parks with neglected or unused space, also might be suitable.
- The site can be temporary and earmarked for another purpose. Bees can be moved fairly easily, with some constraints.
- The most critical requirement is that it needs to be geographically accessible to a reasonable catchment of people. It must be physically accessible, especially for visitors of limited mobility or lacking private transport. Some of Gloucester's designated Open Spaces probably fail this criterion even though providing good spots for bees.
- Unfortunately the site will need to be fenced and out of casual public view. Vandalism and theft are potential problems. People interfering with hives are also likely to get stung or can disturb the bees so others get stung.

Desirable extras

- Shelter available for holding discussions or making tea. This could be a nearby café or community centre if there is nothing suitable on site.
- Small lockable shed for storing equipment.

- Availability of bee-suits is a limiting factor for visitors and these will be in short supply at first. We would hope to get these at low price through sponsors or supporters. Regular visitors usually acquire their own suits.

Finance

The intention is to be self-funding from the start, dependant on finding a site that does not need structural modification, such as fencing. Clearing undergrowth or similar manual tasks needed to prepare the apiary will be done by volunteers.

There are two components: 1) the operation of the apiary, and 2) the provision and management of the bees.

In operation a small charge (£2.50 approx?) will be made per visitor and visit, to be divided between improving and maintaining the apiary for the benefit of visitors, the provision of additional protective equipment (allowing more people to participate) and a bee charity (Bees Abroad). The operation of the apiary will be run on a not-for-profit basis with income being used to benefit the project and increase public access.

All bees and equipment will be provided and owned by the beekeeper(s). Any earnings from honey sales or bees will therefore go to the beekeepers, primarily to be used to meet the expense of keeping hives and bees in good condition and provision of bees and hives. Note that each hive costs about £350 to establish and around £30 annually to maintain, plus needing many hours of work over the season. This is not a commercial enterprise and in some years will make a loss, entirely borne by the beekeepers. The beekeepers also risk loss from theft or vandalism.

About myself

I am 59 and a 3rd generation beekeeper recently moved to Hucclecote from Melbourne, Australia. I was one of two beekeepers running the Ceres community apiary from around 2001. Through the Ceres Community Farm, Melbourne, and other routes I have trained and mentored several hundred beekeepers. Beekeeping is my hobby, not my profession.

Prior to my move to the UK, I worked for the Victorian Environment Protection Authority, Melbourne, managing their Major Projects Unit. I am accustomed to work in partnership with the community, government and industry to deliver environmentally beneficial projects.

I am available as required to discuss the proposal in more detail and my contact details are provided above.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Strudwick

[Links to some examples](#)

Ceres and Collingwood community farms in Melbourne, Australia. I ran part of the apiary at Ceres and assisted with Collingwood.

<http://www.ceres.org.au/>

http://www.ceres.org.au/about/AR2014_FINAL.pdf

<http://www.farm.org.au/>

<https://www.facebook.com/collingwood.bees>

Recent BBC Food Programme reporting on urban beekeeping projects.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b04jhmhh>

Danish community apiary website, mentioned in the programme above.

<http://bybi.dk/?lang=en>