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## 2016 GROUP APIARY REPORT

Regular updates on the group apiary, and ongoing inspections, are posted onto the Group's website, and interested members can follow progress there.

It was a difficult year with the bees at Heligan last season. Despite input from many of our most experienced beekeepers we struggled with failing queens, poorly mated and drone laying queens, mystery disappearances and unexpected findings throughout the season. For me this is not particularly bad news. The apiary is primarily for the education of members, and in particular our newer members. Inspections were well attended by members, and they were able to see first hand that despite our best efforts, we cannot forget that we are dealing with wild animals in a natural environment. Many external factors effect bees, and they will never do quite what we expect. The reality of beekeeping today is that many things effect the bees, and consequently problems and surprises arise. For me, this is what makes beekeeping so fascinating.....I have not met a single beekeeper who feels they have mastered beekeeping, certainly not the bees! Through seeing the problems that arise members, particularly newbees, will be able to see how a variety of experienced beekeepers address the issues seen, and hear the wide diversity of views on what to do. This first hand experience is invaluable, and new members are encouraged to attend – the availability of the Group apiary, and access to experienced beekeepers, is one of the key benefits of membership.

We went into the winter with three colonies (one in a nuc box), and I am pleased to report that yesterday (28<sup>th</sup> January) all three colonies were flying, fondant was given where required, and so we should start this season with three colonies. We won't really know the strength of these colonies until we open them up at the first inspection in spring. I am delighted to announce that Colin Rees has kindly agreed to lead the first inspection again this year, and those that attended last year will remember what a fascinating and informative inspection it was. This is definitely one not to be missed and details will follow soon!

Caven Hammock – Group Apiary Manager – January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016



*Roseland Beekeeping Group is a member of Cornwall Beekeepers Association  
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