

West Wilts BKA News

News, the planned activities and some advice for members of West Wiltshire Beekeepers Association



From the committee

The first committee meeting of 2022 was held on 10th January and, as you can imagine, it was quite packed with all of the current activity. Many of the club activities we have reported in the last couple of newsletters are well underway, such as the apiary move and the Charitable Incorporated Organisation transfer, so we expect a bit of activity on these and then they should quieten down.

The January Committee meeting also spent a significant time discussing what the season ahead holds, such as getting the apiary into full operation, training opportunities, more social events and some aspects of the way we operate (please see the 'Need to Know' section). This is where we really want to understand what you want and expect from us and whether you are willing to help. So in summary, it is still a busy time and we are active to make sure that we provide you with a range of activities for you to further the craft of beekeeping.

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This is your 'go to' section that will describe the things that you need to know about (because it is the stuff that spends your money)!

Good to know **page 5**

The 'fun bits': social events, training and reviews.



Editorial

Welcome to my third edition of an attempt at a Newsletter. Hopefully this is providing you with the information you need and expect (if not, and as ever, please let me know by email: Newsletter-WWBKA@outlook.com).

It has been quite an eventful (and serious) few months with the discussions about the Charitable Status, Apiary Move, Website changes, etc., however I am optimistic that management activities will slow down and we can back to beekeeping as the bees get active. Some of these important activities are now maturing, so I will encourage you to attend some of the upcoming meeting as the organizational decisions made at them will affect the future of the County Association and the constituent branches.

However, we are also starting to get back to some of the 'fun stuff'. Lectures are back on the agenda – virtual, at the moment, but we'll keep an eye on how things develop. Our initial topics are on page 5, and we'll continue to plan more. We've also given to some thought about training, but rather than set courses and have no-one turn up, we are asking for what you want – that is on page 6. We are also starting to sort out a programme at the New Apriary.

Whilst we are on the subject of learning, our President noticed an interesting (free...I like 'free') talk by Dr Samuel Ramsey on Tropilaelaps. There is a link to that on page 7. For those that don't know Dr Ramsey did a lot of work on the way in which Varroa attacks bees – it is worth looking out for other talks by him as he is at the forefront of research. However if you come across any useful little talks like this, please let me know (at Newsletter-WWBKA@outlook.com) and I'll include it in future newsletters

The newsletter format has been fairly stable with the dates for your diary, the serious stuff and then some things that are a bit more fun: the feedback I have had indicates this works.

Diary of events

February 2022

West Wiltshire BKA Lecture - 15th February (Tuesday), 7.30pm; Producing Products from the Hive, Barbara Dalby, Zoom link to all members

West Wilts BKA Special General Meeting – 21st February (Monday), 7pm; to discuss potential Trustees in the event of conversion to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation – by Zoom.

Beginners' course starts – 22nd February (Tuesday); weekly for six weeks with apiary sessions to follow.

Basic course starts – 24th February (Thursday); contact Training-WWBKA@outlook.com for more details.

March 2022

West Wilts BKA Lecture – 3rd March (Thursday), 7.30pm; Swarm Collecting, Dave Bonner, Zoom link to all members

WBKA Charity Conversion Special Meeting – 8th March (Tuesday), 7pm (hybrid meeting); Meeting on conversion to a CIO. The WBKA Secretary will be circulating an email to ALL members in the County strongly encouraging them to vote and explaining how to vote either in person, on Zoom or by post.

Bee Tradex - 12th March (Saturday); NAEC Stoneleigh. Tickets are £6. See: <https://beetradex.co.uk>.

West Wilts BKA Committee meeting - 28th March (Monday), contact Secretary-WWBKA@outlook.com for more details.

April 2022

BBKA Spring Convention – 8th-10th April; Harper Adams University, Shropshire TF10 8NB. See page 7

June 2022

Bath and West Show – 2nd-4th June; nr Shepton Mallet

September 2022

Wilts BKA Honey Bee Health Day – 3rd September (Location To Be Confirmed)

West Wilts BKA Honey Show - 10th September 2022

October 2022

Wiltshire Bee and Honey Day – 8th October (Saturday); Corn Exchange, Devizes

November 2022

West Wilts BKA Annual General Meeting – 7th November

Need to know

West Wiltshire BKA Special General Meeting – 21st February

Charitable Incorporated Organisation Trustees

A Special General Meeting has been called by the Committee for the sole purpose of approving 2 nominees from the West Wilts Beekeepers Association to act as Trustees on the proposed Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). The appointments will take effect if the Wiltshire BKA members vote in favour of applying for CIO status at the WBKA Special General Meeting to be held on 8th March 2022, however it is necessary to nominate prospective Trustees before any vote takes place. There are various legal reasons for this.

The meeting on the 21st February will take place on Zoom, and is unlikely to take longer than 15 minutes. Full details, including the names of the West Wilts' nominees, will be circulated to members no later than Thursday 3rd February.

The Committee is still looking for volunteers to act as CIO Trustees. We would particularly welcome volunteers who are not on the West Wilts Committee. Anyone who might wish to consider supporting the Club as a volunteer is welcome to contact the Chairman on chair-WWBKA@outlook.com for a confidential discussion about the responsibilities and commitment involved. Any offers to be considered as a nominee for the role of Trustee should reach the Secretary on Secretary-WWBKA@outlook.com no later than 20:00 on Monday 1 February 2022.

From the BBKA – Neonicotinoids

You may be aware that the Minister for Agriculture, George Eustace, has approved a derogation from the UK government's commitment to ban the use of neonicitinoid pesticides. He has approved the use of Cruiser SB: Thiamethoxam to be used on sugar beet in 2022. This pesticide will be applied to seed as a dressing before planting if a high aphid count is seen. Aphids carry a virus known as Yellows which adversely affects some crops.

Further background information about this authorisation can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/neonicotinoid-product-as-seed-treatment-for-sugar-beet-emergency-authorisation-application/statement-of-reasons-for-the-decision-on-the-application-for-emergency-authorisation-for-the-use-of-cruiser-sb-on-sugar-beet-crops-in-2022>

The proposed mitigators to counteract the environmental impact following use of this banned pesticide are:

1. the treated area should not be used for the production of flowering crops for 32 months following treatment; and
2. herbicides should be used on the treated area to prevent the flowering of weeds for 32 months following treatment with Thiamethoxam.

These mitigations will have further negative consequences for pollinators in addition to the immediate impact of the use of a known toxin. The treated area will not produce any forage crops such as flowering rape or linseed for 3 years, nor will any wild flowers be able to grow on the treated land. The result will be a 3 year long green monoculture with no forage, leading to possible starvation for the

pollinating insects that have come to rely on forage crops as the natural wild flower habitat decreases.

A final decision is due on 1st March 2022. The BBKA has considered using the Government's Petitions system, but in view of the very tight timescale they do not think this is likely to allow sufficient time. They have therefore asked me to write to you to ask you to raise your concerns by using any forum available.

A petition has been started on the government website. If it raises 10,000 signatures the Government will be required to consider the matter for debate in the Commons.

<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/60678>

In addition, you can sign two other relevant petitions:

<https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/news/bee-killing-pesticides-comeback-george-eustice>

https://party.coop/bee?mc_cid=56537078b8

Please express your opposition in writing to your MP. You can find the contact details for your MP at <https://members.parliament.uk/members/Commons> and entering your postcode.

Good to know

Lectures...are back

Following a short break, mainly due to lots of serious stuff like Annual General Meetings, Charitable Incorporated Organisation status and Apiary Move (as well as some more fun things like the Festive Period), the lectures are back. Due to the high Covid rates, and the fact we can get some great speakers who may be unwilling to travel to deepest-darkest Wiltshire, we are maintaining the 'Zoom lectures'.

So far, we have two lectures confirmed and more being planned. These two are rather different: the first relates to produce from the hive to show the breadth of products you can make and the second is a talk to get people suitably informed to be able to collect swarms. We do hope you will be able to 'come along' and learn from these speakers.

15th February – Producing Products from the Hive, Barbara Dalby

A talk designed to give ideas on some products that can be made from the produce of the hive, using simple ingredients, for home use including candles, polish and simple creams and lotions

3rd March – Swarm Collecting, Dave Bonner

Dave Bonner is an "enthusiastic hobbyist" who runs 25 productive colonies.

He is a Master Beekeeper and has been going to Uganda every Year since 2008, and as a Project manager for Bees Abroad, he has four active projects in rural communities in Northern Uganda.

He is active in the Warwickshire BBKA and was a Seasonal Bee Inspector for ten years.

Training

Introduction to Beekeeping – the Beginners' Course 2022 & Basic Assessment Group

Our Beginner's Course starts on Tuesday 22nd February and the Basic Assessment Group starts on Thursday 24th February. Both run for 6 weeks for the class room sessions and a further 2 weeks practical sessions at our new Apiary in April. The practical sessions are weather dependent so could be delayed. The Beginners' Course is for people wishing to start out in beekeeping and the Basic Assessment Group is for people that have kept their own bees for at least 12 months (after the Basic Assessment Group you will be able to take the Basic exam but there is no pressure to do so).

There are still some spaces and the full details are in the last two newsletters. If you are interested or you know anyone else who may be interested, please contact Training-WWBKA@outlook.com.

Training options (inside the branch)

The committee has also been considering what other training you may want (formal or informal). As a result, we have identified opportunities for training (or shadowing more experienced beekeepers) in the following subjects:

- Honey extraction
- Hive construction
- Swarm Collection
- Improvers
- Queen Rearing

If you are interested in any of these (or would like to suggest other topics), can you let your Training Co-ordinator know please and we determine the appetite with the view of setting up some more focused training. We anticipate that some (such as an Improvers course) may have the entry requirement of the Basic Assessment in line with some of the BBKA further training requirements, but will develop this further as we get responses. As ever, the point of contact in the club to register an interest is: Training-WWBKA@outlook.com.

Other training (outside the branch)

Wiltshire County BKA also organizes training for the 'BBKA Modules'. These are in-depth theoretical exams that can be undertaken to improve knowledge. If you are interested in these, please contact Training-WWBKA@outlook.com to see what is planned.

Spring Convention

BOOK NOW!



Spring 2022 Convention

Friday 8 - Saturday 9 – Sunday 10 April 2022

Harper Adams University, Shropshire, TF10 8NB

Lectures, Workshops and Seminars covering a wide range of practical and scientific topics, directed at all levels of experience, presented by leading experts. Bumper Trade Show Saturday 9th

Speakers and Tutors include; Marin Anastasov, Mark Barnett, Shirley and Richard Bond, Norman Carreck, Lars Chittka, Celia Davis, Joyce Nisbet, Juliet Osborne, Julian Parker, Sara Robb, Nigel Semmence, Jo Widdicombe, Geraldine Wright, and more...

For further information, **and to book** from 31st January
see the Spring Convention pages at www.bbka.org.uk

Tropilaelaps – what's that?

Tropilaelaps is one of those nasty insects that would may beekeeping in the UK an utter misery if it came to this country.

Dr Samuel Ramsey has produced an excellent talk on the subject that is free to view. You can find it at is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p34t9JKadql&t=472s>. Well worth a view!

Contact us

Newsletter content

We will try to send this out as close to the 1st of the month as possible. We will have a copy date of a week before to give us time to get everything together, and we would really like to hear from you. If you want to include anything please send an email to Newsletter-WWBKA@outlook.com.

Contact details for committee and officers

WWBKA President: President-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Chair: Chair-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Treasurer: Treasurer-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Secretary: Secretary-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Training Coordinator: Training-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Apiary Manager: Apiary-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Honey Show Secretary: HoneyShow-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Membership Secretary: Membership-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Asian Hornet Action Team Coordinator: AHAT-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Newsletter Editor: Newsletter-WWBKA@outlook.com