



# CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS

A branch of Kent Beekeepers Association

## EDITOR'S NOTES

The blackthorn is in full blossom in the hedgerows, snowdrops and crocuses have been in bloom for a while, and Spring is just around the corner! We're finally getting some cold temperatures to help reduce the slugs and snails population in our gardens, and we are in the most critical time for bee colonies. Egg-laying will be picking up, and you should be seeing signs of foraging for pollen. The numbers of bees in the colony will be decreasing – it can be quite disconcerting to see hundreds of bee corpses on your (open-mesh) floors. However, for most colonies, that is just the natural order, as the winter bees come to the end of their lives. As beekeepers, we must keep an eye out for starvation, particularly if we have a cold March. Have a peek under the crownboard, and try to estimate the weight of the

hive. You can consider feeding – pollen substitutes will help stimulate the colony to rebuild, but a weaker syrup (50:50) will also stimulate foraging, and should be dribbled into empty comb, if you are worried that a colony is running low on fuel. The colony won't be that keen to have you open up

the box unless it's a good flying day, so now's the time to think about bee-stings. We are very pleased to have Dr Alaisdair Stewart from Medway Maritime Hospital to talk

to us about stings and de-sensitisation on Wed 2<sup>nd</sup> March. We've opened this talk up to Dover, Thanet and Whitstable/Herne Bay BKAs, and hope to have a big turnout from all the local groups. For catering purposes it would be great if you could let us know if you are coming along to Barham this Wednesday.

Adrian

### Next Meeting

#### Sting

#### De-Sensitisation

Barham Village Hall,

Valley Road,

Barham, CT4 6NX

**Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**March**

**7.30-9.30pm**

## CBKA OFFICERS

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The easiest way to contact us is via the website, but you can also e-mail

**cantbees@gmail.com**

Contact Newsletter editor to contribute articles

## MARCH 2016

A newsletter for friends and members of Canterbury BKA

## DATES FOR DIARY

<b>Wednesday 2 March</b>	<b>CBKA branch meeting, "Sting de-sensitization", Alasdair Stewart (Medway NHS) 7.30-9.30pm, Barham Village Hall, Valley Road, Barham, Kent CT4 6NX</b>
Saturday 5 March	Bee Tradex, 9am-4.30pm, Stoneleigh Park, Warks, CV8 2LG website <a href="#">here</a>
Tuesday 8 March	Introduction to Beekeeping course starts, Julian Audsley, 6 evenings at Barham Village Hall, 7-9pm
Thursday 10 March	CBKA committee meeting, 7-9pm, Old Gate Inn, Canterbury
<b>Saturday 12 March</b>	<b>First inspection at Bekesbourne Apiary 2.30pm</b> KBKA Council meeting (am)
Saturday 19 March	BBKA module examination day (location tbc)
<b>Wednesday 6 April</b>	<b>CBKA branch meeting, "Swarms, casts and control", 7.30-9.30pm, Whitefriars Management Suite, Canterbury</b>
Friday 8 <sup>th</sup> April – Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup> April	BBKA Spring Convention, Harper-Adams University, near Newport, Shropshire ( <a href="#">website</a> )

## DIRECTIONS

### Barham Village Hall

There's plenty of parking at the nearly refurbished village hall in Barham Here's a google maps [link](#). Full address: Valley Rd, Barham,, Kent CT4 6NX

**By car** Set Sat Nav post code to CT4 6NX

At the A260 (Crematorium) junction of the A2, join Gravel Castle Road, then turn left onto Church Lane, which will lead you down into Barham. Valley Road runs alongside the Nailbourne, and the village hall is on the opposite side of the road to the river.

**By foot / BUS**

The number 17 bus (towards Folkestone) runs through Barham from Canterbury bus station.





## BRANCH NEWS



### Website

You will have seen a number of communications recently about swarm collection and the Bekesbourne Apiary (more of which below). We are trying to make as much information as possible available on the website, and hence on everyone's smartphone. Where we are delivering personal data such as phone numbers or email addresses, we will keep that private to CBKA members – meaning that you will have to login to the website to see that information. I have tried to ensure that everyone has an account on the website – if you've forgotten your password, it's an easy matter to reset, but if you do have any problems, just email Adrian at [cantbees@gmail.com](mailto:cantbees@gmail.com), and I'll try to resolve any issues.

### Swarm Collection

If you've been a member for a year or more, you will know that we offer a swarm collection service and match-making service to remove swarms from where they are not wanted, and to put them in the hands of beekeepers looking to start up or replenish their apiaries.

We will continue to offer swarm match-making services to our members, via the website mechanism we've established over the last few years. Julian has graciously agreed to be coordinator for these swarm re-homing services.

If you want to have the opportunity to receive a swarm, please sign up at the website [here](#).

We are also keen to know about members who will collect swarms in their locality. The deadline for signing up for the public BBKA national swarm website has passed, but you can still [sign up](#) for a private CBKA listing – Julian is our swarm coordinator, and will try to get the closest member to assist our neighbours in East Kent.

### Hives for Sale

Valerie Lamb is moving out of the area and will have to stop beekeeping (we hope temporarily) whilst she relocates from Petham. If anyone is interested in purchasing her 2 WBC hives and the bees therein, please contact Adrian on [cantbees@gmail.com](mailto:cantbees@gmail.com), and I will put you in contact with Valerie.

### Bekesbourne Apiary

So.... The new Apiary Management webpage is now up and running ([here](#)). It contains all the details you need to know about the Apiary and how it is to be run. Of real interest, the page contains the names and contact details of those who have so far agreed to help with some of the inspections. It also contains the rota with those who have so far signed up to particular duties. This is contained in a Google calendar that you can load to your own calendar on your PC or phone. Handy!

If you have yet to volunteer but are reading this, consider that you don't need any experience or have your own bees to sign-up. Neither are the duties onerous. you just need to spare an hour or so on a Saturday to carry out an inspection of the hives. So, you have never looked inside a top bar, now's your chance. Seen how a Warre works? No? Then please give us a hand. Contact Martin Neame now via the website [page](#) or email [cbka.apiary.manager@gmail.com](mailto:cbka.apiary.manager@gmail.com) for more details

The first inspection is scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> March – look at the website to see which members are leading/assisting at this meeting. Others are welcome to join these inspections – just let the apiary manager, or lead inspector know to look out for you.

We will go to weekly inspections after Easter, so there's plenty of opportunity to participate in the inspections.

## Honey Sales

For a rather long time, I have been developing a "honey sales" listing tool, so that would-be local honey buyers can be put in contact with CBKA honey sellers.. This will go live after the CBKA committee meeting of 10 March, assuming that the committee gives its consent.

To prepare for this, we need to get our honey sellers signed up. It doesn't matter whether you have 250lbs of honey or 20lb – if you already (or are prepared to) sell your honey publicly from your garden gate, or have an arrangement with a local outlet, please add your details to the new page.

The process to create a listing in the honey sales page is designed to be self-service – once you have logged into the website. The process is not difficult, but you should have a look at [this short guide](#) first. Once completed, your entry will appear on the public-facing map, according to the postcode entered by a potential customer.

You can create as many different entries as you want, and you are in control, so if you sell out, you can remove your record, or include a "sold out" message. You can be as specific with your location details as you desire. The general consensus is to avoid identifying the location of your out-apiaries too precisely. You can also include phone numbers and email addresses. Dougal suggests that you create a specific, free-to-operate "gmail" address for honey sales, so that you can identify where contacts are deriving from.

[adrians.honey@gmail.com](mailto:adrians.honey@gmail.com) might be a good example (although someone's bagged this!)

The following disclaimer will be found on the

website:

*"Canterbury Beekeepers offer this directory service to try to match potential purchasers of local honey with local beekeepers.*

*CBKA make no claims about the accuracy of the information, or the quality of the honey that may*

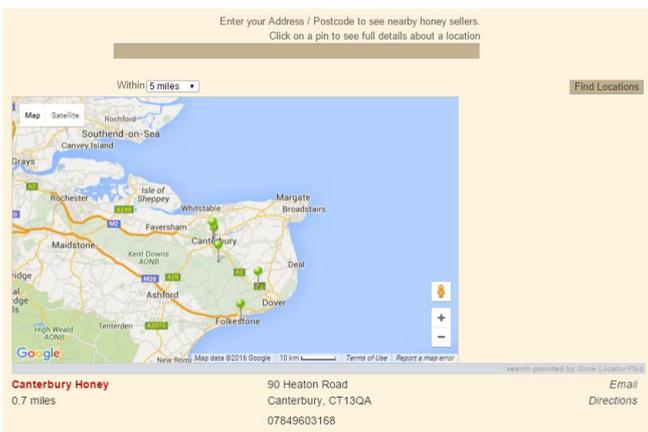
*be purchased. Only members of CBKA can make a listing here, but any purchase agreement will be with the honey seller as an individual, not CBKA."*

We hope that you will want to produce honey of the highest quality, and that meets all the current regulations.

If you are supplying honey to people outside of your immediate family, you need to think about food hygiene standards, food labelling regulations, and the actual Honey (England) Regulations 2015. These are a statutory instrument of Parliament, enforced by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Long articles can be written about on this topic (perhaps on another day).

In the meantime, when selling honey you need to be aware of these relevant pieces of legislation: the [Honey Directive 2001](#) and the [Honey Regulations 2015](#), together with the [Memorandum on Honey Regulations](#). These define the characteristics and requirements of honey prepared for sale for human consumption, in UK and EU. Hampshire County Council Trading Standards office summarises nicely relevant legislation and regulations about labelling [here](#) – includes the Food Information Regulations (2014).

It might seem rather intimidating, but food hygiene for occasional producers is mostly a matter of common-sense. Compliant honey labels are easy to produce, it just needs a little bit of planning.



## BEEKEEPERS @ KSRC

Courses in Spring/Summer 2016

# Beekeepers @ KSRC



The winter series of courses "Key Skills" have just completed at Bridge, which were also run at Tyland Barn in Maidstone before Christmas. We have made a good start at defining our Spring and Summer programme.

First up is a workshop making Asian Hornet traps with Diane Steele, our new Regional Bee Inspector, on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March. Asian Hornets have spread quickly through France, and are efficient predators of honeybee colonies. Traps will enable early warning, and the Kent coast is likely to be one of the first areas to encounter these hornets, should they make the hop over the Channel.

We continue to be able to offer practical bee-handling events in Bridge on 7<sup>th</sup> May, 17<sup>th</sup> May or 22<sup>nd</sup> June. The aim is to provide coaching in reading the bees, proactive management, apiary hygiene and smooth, confident handling. You will get plenty of access to hives, working in small groups so that there's practical learning for each delegate.

Terry Clare will once again offer his popular "queen rearing for small scale beekeepers" courses. There are two alternative dates for the classroom course – 22<sup>nd</sup> May in Maidstone or 4<sup>th</sup> June in Bridge. These courses will be complemented by a practical course on 11<sup>th</sup> July at the Detling Show Ground.

All these sessions are not intended for novices; our target audience is definitely "Improvers" - those who have kept bees for a season or two and are keen to learn more, to improve their understanding and management of their bees. So, if you are interested, bookings may be made from the KSRC website - [www.ksrcbees.org.uk](http://www.ksrcbees.org.uk)

Bob Smith, Julie Coleman and Adrian Davis

## BBKA SPRING CONVENTION 2016

The 2016 BBKA Spring Convention will be held at Harper Adams University 8,9,10 April 2016

Friday 8th April - Members Day & Trade Show

Saturday 9th April - Public Day & Trade Show

Sunday 10th April - Education Day

Harper Adams University, Newport, Shropshire TF10 8NB

**Ticket Sales Now Open - [Click here](#) to order yours today.**



Spring 2016  
Convention

## KBKA NEWSLETTER CLARIFICATION

Jenny Spon-Smith wrote in the KBKA March 2016 newsletter:

"The subscription for 2016-2017 has yet to be set but the cost of Beecraft remains the same and at the Annual Delegates Meeting at Stoneleigh at the beginning of January, delegates voted against a proposed increase in the BBKA capitation fee from £19.00 to £21.00. Delegates did, however, agree to a one off levy of £1.00 per member being paid by associations to specifically contribute to the cost of hosting the 2017 International Meeting of Young Beekeepers. How this levy will be collected has still to be decided."

Dougal Hendry points out that "The Delegates agreement to the additional levy was only given subject to the organisers having achieved over £30,000 in external commercial sponsorship. Until that milestone has been achieved, members will not be called upon for this contribution." There are also inaccuracies in the explanation about how your GiftAid tax relief is deployed. We are seeking clarification at KBKA Council on 12 March.