



CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS



A branch of Kent Beekeepers Association

EDITOR'S NOTES

I find myself again doing a quick weather report – the beautiful Easter weekend weather encouraged us all to think that winter is behind us, and I know of multiple swarming activities over that weekend. I was on my way to inspect our bees in Palmsted and stopped off to check out a report of bees trying to enter a house. In fact, when I got there, there was a huge cloud of bees in the air – which quickly settled high up in a hawthorn tree, at what looked like an impossible place to get a ladder. Fortunately for me, and a neighbouring beekeeper, the bees sensibly decamped after ~90min into an empty hive in the orchard next door, so everyone was happy! Similarly David Cockburn returned from holiday to find a couple of swarms of bees taking up home in his bait hives, which goes to demonstrate the merits of a box with old comb (or swarm lure) in place, ideally a few metres off the ground.

Now of course, we are stuck with some cool weather, but hopefully those of you with OSR close by will be getting honey (or build-up) despite the chill. I see that the horse chestnuts are coming into

flower as well, so we need some good flying days to get the laggard colonies on their way. I'm hoping that the cool air moves in time for our next meeting on Saturday 4th May – we plan to return to Palmsted to see how things have progressed

– and beginners will probably be amazed how much difference there can be between colonies on the same site.

By the time you read this, the BBKA winter survey will have closed, but whether or not you managed to participate in that effort, there is

also the pan-European COLOSS monitoring initiative. Dr Anthony Williams, the COLOSS Survey Coordinator for England, and a member of Leicester and Rutland Beekeepers Association would be grateful to any beekeepers who could take the time to fill out the COLOSS survey. There's more information on pp8-9.

Finally, don't forget to look at our [Facebook page](#) once in a while, and post pictures of your beekeeping escapades! It's a good way to stay in touch, and also to give friendly advice to our beginner beeks. It's a closed group so you might need to request access (I rarely decline ☺) Adrian

Apiary Meeting
**Inspection at
Palmsted
Wood**
Bekesbourne
Sat 4th May
2.00-4.00pm
Details on p2

CBKA Officers

Chairman:

Michael Roberts
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Canterbury CT2 8AP
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Treasurer and Membership:

Joan McAllister
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Secretary & Newsletter Editor:

Adrian Davis
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07816 975286

Committee Members

Stuart Andrews
Julian Audsley ([courses](#))
David Cockburn
Simon Daniell
Dougal Hendry
Maggie McKenzie
Janet McDonald
Magdalene Mei Halkes
Michael Roberts
Jan Soetaert

The easiest way to contact us is via email using the links above, but you can also use the contacts page on the website.

Contact [Newsletter Editor](#) to contribute articles

MAY 2019

DATES FOR DIARY: yearbook at <http://canterburybeekeepers.org.uk/calendar/cbka-list/>

2019

Sat May 04	Apiary meeting – inspection at Palmsted Wood
Sat May 25	Meet the public – BeeDay at Whitefriars (to be confirmed)
Sat June 01	Apiary meeting, Jan's place. Queen rearing preparations
Sun June 16	Meet the public – Apple Festival at Brogdale
Sat June 29th	Apiary Meeting – Safari with the Bee Inspector
Sun July 21	Meet the public – Cherry Festival at Brogdale
Sat Aug 3	Apiary Meeting – Honey extraction and preparation for shows

You can get our calendar, either as a google calendar (cantbees@gmail.com), or for other programmes using this URL: <https://calendar.google.com/calendar/ical/cantbees%40gmail.com/public/basic.ics>

APIARY MEETING

Palmsted Wood, Bokesbourne Lane,
Bokesbourne CT4 5DX

Saturday 4th May, 2-4pm

We hope that many of you can join us at Palmsted Wood this coming weekend. There are 5 stocked hives in place; two of them are strong (Rosie and Regina), two of them are getting going (Raquel and Raina), and Yolanda is really short on bees. The management needs of these colonies are very different, so it should be an interesting meeting. You can have a look at the inspection records beforehand by logging into our website, and navigating to <https://canterburybeekeepers.org.uk/home/apiary-records/>



Normal apiary hygiene rules apply – so please bring clean bee-suits, clean disposable gloves (no leather gloves), and wellington boots. If you need to borrow a beesuit, please email secretary@beekeepers.org.uk, so we can make sure to have an appropriate number of suits available.

MAP: <https://goo.gl/maps/EA4SF5ugxTq>

The map marks the entrance to the wood – if you are coming down Bokesbourne Lane from the Canterbury direction, you will pass a 7-bar metal gate on the left, which is opposite a track. This is about 100yds from the main entrance, also on the left. The gate on the LHS of this driveway will be open for you to drive through. If you get to Highfield Care Home, you've missed the entrance! If you are arriving from the south/Patrixbourne, then it's 50yds past Highfield Care Home, on your right. Drive along the track for about 100 yds and park on the left. As a courtesy to our hosts, Sally and Chris, and to their neighbours, please make sure that you park inside the gate, so that no obstruction of the entrance place takes place.



BRANCH NEWS

Apiary Site in Faversham

I was recently contacted by James Jenkison of Foresight Group plc, who manage solar farms. They have such a farm on the edge of Faversham and would like to encourage a local beekeeper to establish on it. Please contact Adrian if you want the contact details for James:

<mailto:secretary@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk?subject=Faversham solar farm>

Early Notice of Bee Safari

Most years we organize a Bee safari with our seasonal bee inspector. This year is no exception, and Kay Wreford will be visiting our area on 29th June. We strongly encourage any members who haven't had Kay visit previously to take advantage – Kay will check the health of your bees, and we invite branch members in the vicinity to "tag along", as it's a great learning opportunity for us all, as Kay is a very experienced, wise beekeeper/inspector. We are limited in the number of apiaries she can visit, so book early to avoid disappointment! Just let Adrian know:

<mailto:secretary@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk?subject=bee safari>

Getting ready for BeeDays

Many people had good crops of honey in 2018. Our first branch "meet the public" event where we sell honey and other hive products will be on 25th May, so this is early warning for those of you who still have honey in buckets. In fact, if you wanted to help out bottling honey from the branch apiary, I'm sure that David Cockburn and Magdalene Mei Halkes would appreciate the assistance! Please volunteer by emailing the committee at

<mailto:committee@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk?subject=honey bottling help>

Bees and Equipment for sale

One of our members, Janet Fry, is having to step back from beekeeping, and has asked me to make known that she's offering equipment and bees for sale. Please contact Janet directly if you

wish to learn more (details below; she is in Rhodes Minnis)

- National Hive with brood chamber, 2 supers, open mesh floor queen excluder varroa board. There are no bees in this hive.
- WBC hive with 3 lifts, brood chamber, 3 supers, open mesh floor, queen excluder varroa board, eke. There is a thriving colony in this hive.
- WBC hive with 3 lifts, brood chamber, 2 supers, open mesh floor, queen excluder varroa board. I think the colony is queenless and I may merge them with the other hive.

I also have 2 top feeders, a smoker. 2 hive tools, a drone comb, a queen cage, a bee brush, a 4 frame extractor with 6 litre settling tank and strainer

I can be contacted by email

<mailto:janet@rhodesminnis.org.uk?subject=equipment enquiry>
or by phone 01303-863177

Bees and Equipment for sale (2)

Some of you will also remember Chris Bristow, who for a few years was an active member of the branch and committee. He also has stocked hives for sale. Here's his notice:

I'm sadly selling my bees. I have 6 hives - all strong and ready to go. They have been good honey producers. In fact they all have some honey from last year as well as already building this year's crop. I haven't treated the bees for two years, always left lots of honey for them, and they have flourished. The hives all have a minimum of a brood and two supers - some with multiple brood boxes - so heavy. There are 3 or 4 that could be split very easily.

Ideal for new beekeepers wanting to get started quickly with a crop this year or beekeepers looking to expand.

Please text me at 07872-928138 and I will call back. Chris Bristow

KENT BEE-KEEPERS' ASSOCIATION



General Secretary:

Jennifer Spon-Smith
77 Bushey Way
Beckenham
BR3 6TH

e-mail: Jennifer@spon-smith.com

April 2019

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of Kent Bee-Keepers' Association will be held on Saturday, 18th May 2019 at Lenham Community Centre at 11.30 a.m. or thereabouts immediately following the Council meeting. The meeting is purely a formality to comply with legal requirements but any full member of KBKA wishing to attend the AGM is welcome to sit in at the Council meeting commencing at 10.00 a.m.

KENT BEE-KEEPERS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This will be held at Lenham Community Centre, 12 Groom Way, Lenham ME17 2QT on Saturday, 18th May 2019 at 11.30 a.m. or thereabouts at the conclusion of the Council meeting

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the AGM held on 19th May 2018
3. Minutes of reconvened AGM held 28th July 2018
4. To elect a President
5. To adopt the Annual Report and Accounts for year ended 30th September 2018
6. To appoint an Independent Examiner for the Accounts in accordance with statutory requirements

Jennifer Spon-Smith
General Secretary

Lesley Fancote, having served as President for three years, is eligible for re-election

At the Council meeting on 24th November 2018 the Executive officers were elected as follows:

Chair:	David Bragg
Vice-Chair:	Steve Clarkson
General Secretary:	Jennifer Spon-Smith
Treasurer and Examinations Secretary:	John Hendrie
Membership Secretary:	Steve Clarkson
Council representatives on Executive and Finance Committee:	David Rea; Julie Coleman



Managing the Asian Hornet threat

Practical advice from France

organised by [Weald Branch of Kent Beekeepers Association](#)

Date and Time: Sat, 1 June 2019, 14:00 – 16:00 BST

Location: [Lenham Community Centre](#), 12 Groom Way, Lenham, Kent, ME172QT [Click for Directions](#)

Description:

There is growing concern amongst beekeepers and government officials about the invasion of the Asian Hornet as a non native species to the UK.

In 2018 there were 4 nests destroyed in the UK, with additional sightings of dead or single hornets - two of the sightings were in Dungeness, Kent. 2019 may see an increase in these numbers and we should be prepared.

Robert Moon is a professional pest controller and beekeeper living in France. In 2018 Rob removed more than 100 Asian Hornets nests. During the talk Robert will tell us about his pest control experience of Asian Hornets but also his view as a beekeeper. He will show us pictures as well as videos of some of his encounters.

Learn how to set up monitoring traps and what to do in the event of a sighting, how to report such sightings to whom.

This event will be helpful for ecologists, nature lovers, members of the public and beekeepers alike and our intention is to create awareness to nip any invasion in its early stages. We hope to also have a Defra presence and a bee inspector.

The event (2pm-4.00pm) costs £10/head up to 25th of May, £11 afterwards.

TICKET HOLDERS WILL BE ABLE TO ENJOY A DISCOUNT OF 10% FOR [BBWEAR](#) PROTECTIVE CLOTHING.

Refreshments will be available. Booking must be made in advance.



Positive Thinking No. 20

April, 2019



Mission Statement:

- To further and promote the craft of beekeeping
- To advance the education of the public in the importance of bees in the environment.

The unified voice of British Beekeeping

From Margaret Wilson, BBKA Chair

CIO

We have communicated again with the solicitor on some minor points and they have informed us that after those small changes the documents will go off to the Charity Commission for authorisation. Rather later than we wanted, but hopefully, that will not make any difference to the eventual timing.

FUNDING

The Defra funding has been extended to cover this year and we are consequently able to support GH and AH training once again. That is a real bonus for our members and areas will be published as soon as possible.

SPECIAL EDITIONS

The new 'Queen Rearing Special Edition' was available at the Spring Convention and it certainly flew off the shelf!. We will also be giving information on the proposed queen-rearing programme as soon as this is completed. It will go a good way for allowing us to be self sufficient as far as queen availability goes. Hopefully after the candidates receive their training, they can go back to their branches and spread the knowledge to other beekeepers."

We have more Special Editions in the course of production, 'Wax' will be the next one printed.

SHOWS

Once again the Shows Committee will be pulling out all the stops at the Chatsworth Show on June 5th to the 9th 2019, and again at Countryfile Live at Blenheim on the 1st to the 4th August 2019. So if you are attending these shows, come along and meet the people who organise and give their time to the events.

The Hive Experience is a great attraction and we are pleased that some of the associations are using this to give a wonderful experience to non- beekeepers at their own shows. If you have not seen it, here is an opportunity for you to have the 'experience' yourself if you go to either show.

STONELEIGH BUILDING

We applied for planning permission to provide toilets for people with a disability and cloakroom facilities within the footprint of our site at Stoneleigh. This was originally refused as there was concern about parking. However, after an appeal we did get planning permission. The first part of the work has to be the re siting of the oil storage tanks and I have just been informed that this will take place over the Easter break. We will then be in a position to proceed with the remainder of the building works.

If you were at the Spring Convention you would have had the opportunity of looking at some of the designs for the out apiary at Stoneleigh. They are the work of the first year students at Pershore College who volunteered to do these as part of their projects at the college. It is amazing that they all received the same brief but all had vastly different ideas for the site. The final design has not as yet been decided but the apiary is now well managed and hopefully, we will have bees for all the required events for the coming season.

CAPITATION

By now, most associations will have received their capitation invoices on the new system. Let us hope that this year the information on the head office database is compatible with the associations' information. If this is successful, this will make life much easier for the treasurers of each branch and association. Fingers crossed it all works wonderfully well.

Spring Convention 2019

Concerns have been raised with me that in the recent 'Positive Thinking' number for March 2019 I may have inadvertently denigrated the excellent BBKA Spring Convention. This was certainly not my intention and I apologise both for the poor timing of that message and for any offence it may have caused. The questionnaire included has been withdrawn and there will shortly be a new request for feedback developed with and agreed by the dedicated members of the BBKA Spring Convention Committee.

I would like to go on to say that the Spring Convention this year was very busy. We were privileged to speak to many members who visited the BBKA stand, in some cases it was good to put a face to a name but in all cases it was great to hear your opinions of the Convention and of course the BBKA.

The Trustees who attended dedicated their time to covering the BBKA stand and helping where required introducing speakers etc., in fact that is probably the only speaker they got to hear, as the rest of the time they were working on the stand and communicating with you, our members.

By now the Spring Convention Committee who organise this will already be trying to close off this year's event and making plans for the 2020 Convention. Like all volunteers for the BBKA, they all give their time freely. I am always amazed that within the BBKA we have so many people who do this without a single thought of reward, so I hope you will join me in giving a huge 'thank you' to both the Committee members and the stewards who worked so hard at the event.

RESEARCH

There was an afternoon at the Spring Convention dedicated to the research projects that we have funded recently. This was well attended and the four groups gave excellent presentations describing the work they have completed with the funding from BBKA. More details of the various projects will be put on the website (look for 'Research' on a pull-down menu on the front page).

In addition, Pam Hunter gave a short presentation outlining the EU PoshBee project. Currently (during April – May) our volunteer beekeepers have 24 colonies on apple orchards in Kent and the staff from Reading University will be collecting various samples from the colonies. Updates again will be posted on our website.

2018-2019 ENGLAND WINTER LOSSES

The Official English COLOSS 2019 Survey

Monitor Honey Bee Colony Losses spring 2019

Letter from COLOSS

Dear Beekeeper.

In the last decade, elevated losses of western honey bee colonies have been observed, mainly in Europe and North America, but the underlying causes still remain unclear. In 2008, European and USA honey bee experts formed a network "COLOSS" realising that efforts by individual countries to identify the drivers of loss were unlikely to succeed, given the current consensus that causes are complex and can be different between regions and between the years. Now more than 1000 scientists are working together in this network in specific working groups.

The epidemiological working group have developed a standardised questionnaire to identify the underlying causal factors of losses and provide beekeepers sustainable management strategies.

We now invite you to fill in the questionnaire for 2019 which you will find at:

<https://www.bee-survey.com/index.php/368949>

This will enable us to compare your answers with other beekeepers. With your data we can estimate the relative risk of colony losses for beekeeper decisions such as Varroa treatment, migration of colonies and comb replacement. We also aim to identify differences in relative mortality risk between regions. This will enable follow up research projects in specific regions.

At your option your personal details may be recorded however we undertake not to disclose them to any third party to protect your privacy.

Finally your help is much appreciated. Please can I ask you to promote this survey and the questionnaire link through this open letter to as many English bee keepers as you are able to do so. Feel free to share the link by email, word of mouth, newsletters or social media and to your local bee keeping organisations. In doing so you will be making a contribution to tackling the problem of colony losses and ensuring that English data is represented as an equal partner in the COLOSS European community.

Thanking you

Dr Anthony Williams
COLOSS Survey Coordinator for England
De Montfort University
A Member of Leicester and Rutland Beekeepers Association
Email: anthony.williams@dmu.ac.uk

Tel: 0116 207 8468

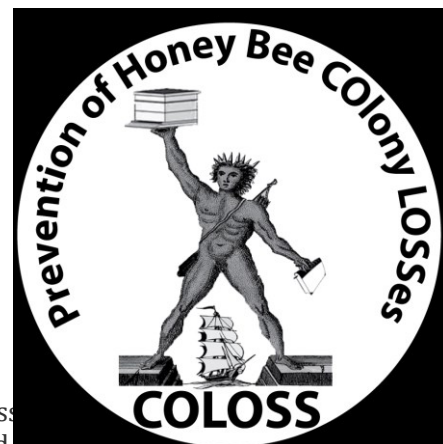
About COLOSS

COLOSS is a pan European network of researchers, beekeepers and government representatives that provides resources and opportunities to disseminate latest bee keeping research.

The mission of COLOSS is to improve the well-being of bees (in particular the western honey bee *Apis mellifera*) at a global level.

Our goals include:

- Advocating for bees, and their well-being, especially to government legislators and administrators
- Coordinating international research, including the development of standard research methods



- Disseminating knowledge and training related to improving the well-being of bees
- Promoting youth development and gender balance among those studying, or those actively involved in promoting, the well-being of bees

The survey team is made up of in excess of 30 countries, most of the European regions are involved in COLOSS monitoring. Each national co-ordinator runs a similar survey in their own country, using a standardised questionnaire. The national co-ordinators are a mix of university researchers and academics (in biology, zoology, veterinary science, statistics, computer science) and professional beekeeping advisers, all with an interest in honey bee well-being. Many are themselves beekeepers. More information about COLOSS can be found at www.coloss.org

Address: Institute of Bee Health University of Bern Schwarzenburgstrasse 161 3003 Bern Switzerland

Anthony Williams works at De Montfort University in the school of Computer Science and Informatics. He has been keeping honey bees for 9 years and is linked to two regional associations. He quietly looks after a small apiary in his spare time. Anthony got involved in COLOSS at the beginning of 2018 and volunteered his services when he discovered that English hive survival data was no longer being collected and disseminated at a European level.