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| logoSURREY BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATIONWEYBRIDGE DIVISION NEWSLETTER: October 2017[**www.weybridgebeekeepers.weebly.com**](http://www.weybridgebeekeepers.weebly.com/) |

***Editorial***

When visiting areas remote from our own, it is always interesting to talk with beekeepers in that area. On a recent holiday in Northern Ireland, we met a local beekeeper who has 27 hives. He said that people there have been importing ‘rubbish bees’ rather than breeding their own local ‘Irish Black’ bees. In particular, he dislikes Buckfast bees, which he says are not good workers and whose (first generation) daughters produce very aggressive progeny there. Both of these comments were a great surprise to me, having used Buckfast bees and their progeny for many years and never having seen either trait; indeed rather the opposite. It is an illustration of how different areas and different crosses affect the performance of bees. He went on to explain how, in Northern Ireland, he is able to have his new queens DNA tested to ensure that he is maintaining the ‘Irish Black’ strain. In his opinion swarm queen cells (being natural) produce the best queens. He produces his queen cells in a 6-frame hive that is crammed with bees to induce swarming conditions. When the sealed queen cells are ready, he divides the colony into 3 two-frame nucs, putting any other queen cells into Apideas (mini-nucs), or holding them in incubators. It was a pretty intense conversation and I would like to have talked with him longer, but he is a very busy man who owns an excellent, bustling baker’s shop in which we enjoying morning coffee.

As some of you have in the past, do send in your own holiday bee experiences for us all to enjoy.

I can’t let this issue of the newsletter go without some reference to the recent Asian hornet sightings. Now they have been seen in both North Devon (Woolacombe, confirmed) and possibly South Devon (Plymouth), it would appear that they really are here – poor bees.

**Subscriptions – if not already paid, these are now OVERDUE**

As explained in the last news letter Subscriptions start on 1st October regardless of when you joined the association.  Thank you to all those who have paid their subscriptions already.  As I am off on holiday on Friday and will not be back until 23rd October please get your subscriptions in as soon as possible.  No other reminders will be issued.  If paying after 6th October please pay electronically rather than by cheque as they will not be banked until after 24th October.  Any members whose subs have not been paid by 31st October will find that they will cease to receive BeeCraft and BBKA News which come out in November and their BDI will be discontinued.  If you subsequently renew you may find that you will not receive the November printed issues, as distribution dates may have already passed, although you will still be able to access the digital version of BeeCraft.

Michael Main (Treasurer)

As explained in the email sent recently to all newsletter recipients who are not currently members, now is the time to choose to remain in touch by becoming a Friend of Weybridge Beekeepers (£5 per annum). After this October issue, Newsletters will only be sent to Members and Friends.

**Potential Beekeeping Centre in Pleasant Place, Hersham: Update 10.**

As the saying goes two steps forward, one step back.  Last month I wrote that we expected to go to the Council meeting for approval on the 20th September.  There were still one or two small issues to be resolved with the Head of Terms agreement and all parties felt that this would be easily achieved through a process that had been outlined.  Unfortunately this proved not to be the case and even though we have been sent a new timeplan (below) based on it being presented at the October meeting, the project committee have little faith that the deadline of October 3rd will be met.  It is highly likely that it could go back to the November or even January meeting to allow time for the outstanding issues to be resolved.

03/10/2017        Deadline for report to be seen and comments approved by Head of Legal, Finance and Council Management Board

05/10/2017        Deadline for Final Draft

18/10/2017        Date of Meeting

24/10/2017        Date of cabinet decisions to be published

In reality a delay at this stage is not a major issue on the critical time plan and the adjusted, pessimistic timeplan looks like this:

Dec 2016         Business Plan Submitted

Jan 2018          Elmbridge Council HOT agreed

Feb/Mar            Surrey Beekeepers Trustees approve HOT

 Detailed plans drawn up for costs and planning application

Mar                  EGM WBK Meeting for approval

 Planning application process

 Start fund raising

Jan – Sept        Complete fundraising and select contractor

Nov – Feb        Carry out work

Jan 2019           Move bees in

Feb                  Move in

April 2019        First practical course run

As they say about some things it is a Marathon not a Sprint and this is certainly the case.  We must be patient and work through things at the Council speed, which may not be as fast as we like.

David Parker

**Update on vandalism at St George’s College Teaching Apiary, Weybridge**

Andrew Halstead has had a site meeting with Mike Bessant of Surey Police to look at security. As expected, there was not a lot that could be done with the site to stop someone determined to get in. However, some suggestions were made, and the matter will be discussed further at the next committee meeting on 2 October.

**REPORTS**

**September Apiary Meeting – Social Event / BBQ, 9th September**

**WBK Barbecue and Social**

*We have two unsolicited reports of this event - thank you both for these. We were away on holiday so were sadly unable to enjoy the afternoon. Maybe the editor and his wife should always stay away from events if that will produce two reports instead of the usual solicited one…*

On Saturday 9th September, I carefully followed directions to the right end of Rowtown, and then signs to the wonderful garden of Helen and Paul Bunclark. The marquee was already up, the barbecue smoking, and friendly people showing me where to put my contribution to the buffet. The weather forecast was poor, but in fact we had some lovely sunshine as we sat and ate and chatted about our beekeeping year. Some keen, fresh new beekeepers from the summer practical course were there, eager to share their successes and ask questions, and some more seasoned division members offered their observations and advice. We visited the bee enclosure and hugely well organised bee shed run by our hosts. Paul had arranged some interesting frames of worker eggs for us to look at. Around mid afternoon, the rain started and the party split up. Many thanks to the Bunclarks for a lovely do, and to David Parker for running a first class barbecue. A photograph of some of the attendees is attached.

Jane Hunter

So we almost got away with it, the rain stayed away until about 3.30pm which meant almost all the 25 – 30 people who came could enjoy their BBQ lunch outside in glorious sunshine.  We ended up with a great variety of salads, several with vegetables from the Garden/Allotment and of course Martin’s home baked bread and a great variety of desserts.  With such an amazing location it was hard for everyone not to have a really good time and when the rain did come Paul and Helen had of course put plan B in place and a huge Marquee was available for us to move into.  Many people trooped off to have a look at Paul and Helen’s apiary set up, which is amazing with a double glazed window from their shed overlooking the apiary so you don’t even have to suit up to look at the bees.  Many of the men of course walked away with ‘Shed Envy’ at what can only be described as the largest barn workshop any of us could dream of, let alone a lovely MG Midget parked in it.   Thank you to everyone who turned up, and it was nice to see some new faces.   A big thank you from Weybridge Division goes out to Paul and Helen for hosting us on their amazing site.

 David Parker

**Plans for the Summer 2018 Meetings**

If you have any ideas for the Summer 2018 Beekeepers’ meetings around topics, or would like to host a meeting, please shout.  I know there has been a request for those that missed it to visit Arran’s amazing set up again so we will be making enquiries?  The plan will be to publish in early 2018 an outline schedule again for the summer to give everyone plenty of notice.

David Parker (davidparker@polymathconsulting.com)

**EVENTS IN OCTOBER**

**86th National Honey Show, Sandown Race Course, Esher, 26-28 October**

Details in April Newsletter p. 4, the July newsletter p. 3. and on the National Honey Show website.

We have just received the further following details relating to the Show:

Lecture details found on <http://www.honeyshow.co.uk/lectures-and-workshops.php#main>

and <http://www.honeyshow.co.uk/lectures-and-workshops.php#beginners>

Workshops are open to National Honey Show members. They are popular and must be booked in advance. Booking opens on 1st September.  Booking information is given on our website <http://www.honeyshow.co.uk/workshop-booking.php>.

Many volunteers are needed to help run the show.  If you can offer a couple of hours or half a day stewarding, you would be warmly welcomed. *See further details about the need for helpers on page 6.*

We also need chairpeople for the workshops and lectures.

Do please contact Bill: chiefsteward@honeyshow.co.uk.

It’s not too late to plan your entries or a visit to the show.

Look forward to seeing you there.

Val, Fiona and Helen

[www.honeyshow.co.uk](http://www.honeyshow.co.uk/)

*I have attempted to publish all relevant information for the Honey Show, but the details for this event have come rather sporadically, so do look at what Jane has been sending out and the official Honey Show website to ensure that you have the very latest information.*

**Professor Dave Goulson - Talk on Wednesday 11th October, an invitation from Kingston Beekeepers**

Kingston Beekeepers Association are pleased to announce the speaker for our next Talk & Social on Wednesday 11 October is **Professor Goulson**.  An entertaining, informative speaker and so popular that he was booked many months ago!  He has presented at many conferences and shows so you may have already been entertained by him and his extensive knowledge. His bio says it all …..

*Professor Dave Goulson was brought up in rural Shropshire, where he developed an early obsession with wildlife.  He studied Biology at Oxford University, followed by a PhD on butterfly ecology at Oxford Brookes. Subsequently, he lectured for 11 years at the University of Southampton where he began to study bumblebees in earnest. He subsequently moved to Stirling University in 2006, and then to Sussex in 2013. He has published more than 260 scientific articles on bumblebees and other insects. He is the author of Bumblebees; Their Behaviour, Ecology and Conservation (2010, Oxford University Press), and of the Sunday Times bestseller A Sting in the Tale, a popular science book about bumble bees (2013, Jonathan Cape), now translated into thirteen languages. This was followed by A Buzz in the Meadow in 2014 and Bee Quest in 2017. Goulson founded the Bumblebee Conservation Trust in 2006, a charity which has grown to 10,000 members. He was the BBSRC’s Social Innovator of the Year in 2010, was given the Zoological Society of London’s Marsh Award for Conservation Biology in 2013, was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 2013, and given the British Ecological Society Public Engagement Award in 2014. In 2015 he was named number 8 in BBC Wildlife Magazine’s list of the top 50 most influential people in conservation.*

 Dave will be talking about a topic close to every beekeeper : ***Bees, pesticides and farming focusing on the impacts of neonicotinoids and other pesticides on bees.***

There is a small charge for this particular event to cover expenses for the speaker and the hall. Please could you contribute £7.50 at the door - cash transactions would be greatly appreciated as we have no debit card facility. The venue is Elmgrove Hall, Hersham Road, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, KT12 1LH at 7.30pm.

All those who wish to book please contact Jane Satchwell direct on  jmsatchwell@[yahoo.com](http://yahoo.com/)

**FUTURE EVENTS**

**Weybridge Beekeepers’ AGM**

Saturday 11th November. Full details later.

**Central Association of Bee-Keepers**

Social Evening Thursday 26th October, during the National Honey Show

Autumn Conference Friday 17th – Sunday 19th November, in Kenilworth

Details and booking forms for both of these highly recommended events are in attachments.

**Bee Improvement for All** West Sussex BKA and BIBBA –Sunday November 19th all day.

Details September p. 4.

**ITEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST**

**Apiary site available**

I am giving up one of my out apiaries. Basically, it's a field in Ockham, opposite the Black Swan pub. I have had a couple of colonies there for the last three years, or so. If anyone is interested, please contact me and I shall be pleased to discuss and show it and, of course, introduce them to the owner, who lives close by. I have been paying the "usual" amount of rent.

Paul Hildersley – 07827 916186

**An appeal for help from a member**

Because of Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI) in both my wrists, I am having problems in opening up my hive at home and need to do my honey extraction.

It would be useful if beginners – or any others – could help. My phone is 07768 390330.

Derek Williamson

**A challenge with a reward…**

An excellent apiary site is available, plus an opportunity to help prevent the potential spread of brood disease in our area.

A few days ago, on land near Thorpe, we inspected five hives which have been totally neglected for at least 6 years. We picked up that on one or two occasions the hives had been looked at by beekeepers, but not looked after during that period. We had anticipated colonies in a pretty poor state with the possibility of infestation of foul brood. There was a special interest in these bees as they were left by John Hudson, well known and remembered with affection by some of the older members of our association. He who moved to the New Forest several years ago and very sadly passed away shortly after moving.

Three of the colonies have died out, and a fourth has bees but appears to be queenless (only drone brood present). The fifth, despite its neglect, was really very strong with plenty of bees, several frames of sealed brood and a little, healthy unsealed brood. It would be well worth while giving this colony a clean hive and transferring it to new foundation next spring. Consideration could be given to adding the bees in the apparently queenless colony to this one. There is wild comb and propolis everwhere and the hives themselves are in a bad mess; it was only possible to inspect some parts by breaking them open.

Very surprisingly we did not see any varroa mites in or out of cells or any evidence of varroa damage, although there will obviously be mites in the hives. No sign of foul brood was found, although caution in this respect should be exercised regarding the hives that have died out. The very dirty frames and old wax in them need to be burned and the hives thoroughly scorched.

The delightful, very large site where the hives are is owned by John’s brother, Bob, a quiet, helpful man who several of us have met in the past when John held meetings there. He has an interest in, but no great knowledge of beekeeping. However, he does like to have bees on his land in memory of his brother, and would welcome a beekeeper – or two – to sort out and look after what remains of John’s bees. He also invites these beekeeper(s) to put their own bees on the site. John used to have about 20 hives there and Bob would probably accommodate a reasonable number in exchange for some jars of honey each season.

It is an excellent site for bees. Bob runs an orchard with about 100 fruit trees, and some years oilseed rape is grown in the field next to his land, so the honey crop should be good.

The fear is that if no one takes up this offer, Bob may simply leave the bees to themselves, setting up a potential centre of disease in the area.

If you are interested in this opportunity, please ring one of us and we will give you more details and Bob’s contact number. If we needed another apiary ourselves, we would jump at this one!

Geoff and Marion Cooper

**Propolis – do not throw your scrapings away**

Alison Derrick from BeeInspired -  <https://www.beeinspiredcreams.buzz/>- has been in touch asking if you the members can help her source one of the raw materials that she uses in her skincare products, namely propolis. If this is something you collect, or can collect, Alison would like to hear from you (email: ask@beeinspiredcreams.buzz; mobile: 07825 278 044)

She finally got certification for her [Propolis and Calendula Creams](http://www.beeinspiredcreams.buzz/product-category/skincare/intensive-creams/) which are already selling well, so she is looking for beekeepers to keep their propolis scrapings rather than tossing them on the ground. *Would we do that???*

Any condition is fine as any bee parts or splinters are filtered out during the making process. She's happy to pay or to exchange for products.

Her tips for collecting are to routinely scrape across the top bars and put into a jar. When cleaning up the boxes in the winter (or at any time) she puts down a cloth and then collects any scrapings when she's finished.  Some hives create more ‘stick’ than others and the propolis can either be brittle or sticky – both are excellent.  Though it’s better not to collect the propolis when any chemicals have been administered, so before is better.  She collects all through the year, as and when the bees stick everything down.

Richard Hignett

*This is not a very big ask – just put your propolis scrapings into a bag instead of into the rubbish bin. It would obviously mean a lot to Alison.*

**One-day workshops on pollen**

We are disappointed and sorry to announce that, due to insufficient interest, these workshops have been cancelled for the time being. This really is a great pity as it was the chance to learn a simple and new method for the preparation of pollen slides from which the pollen could then be identified, thus suggesting where our bees might be foraging. We look forward to these workshops taking plae at a later date.

**Free entry to the National Honey Show**

Earn free entry to the 86th National Honey Show at Sandown Park on one of the three days, in return for spending a half of the day helping either on SBKA’s Information Stand or BeeCraft’s B’KIDS stand.

If you can help on either of the stands please let Richard Bradfield know the times you can manage and SBKA will organise a rota (richard.d.bradfield@btinternet.com).

SBKA stand – Volunteers still needed for:

Thur 26th Oct – AM 9.00 – 13.30

Fri 27th Oct – AM 9.00 – 13.30

Sat 28th Oct – PM 13.00 – 17.30

 (inc. from 16.30 to take down the display)

B’KIDS stand – Volunteers still needed for:

Fri 27th Oct – AM 8.30 – 13.00

Sat 28th Oct – AM 8.30 – 13.00

**ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST**

**Beeswax to relieve insomnia?**

Stressed and struggling to sleep? BEESWAX could help, scientists discover:

* An ingredient found in the natural wax induced better sleep in stressed mice
* The same compound is also found in wheat germ oil, sugar cane and rice bran
* Called octacosanol, it decreases stress hormones say Japanese researchers
* The plant chemical is already available in supplement form to lower cholesterol
* Experts say it's safe but more research is needed to test its effect on insomnia

By [Claudia Tanner For Mailonline](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/home/search.html?s=&authornamef=Claudia+Tanner+For+Mailonline)

PUBLISHED: 17:03, 5 September 2017 | UPDATED: 12:11, 6 September 2017

For the full article see: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-4854786/Stressed-struggling-sleep-BEESWAX-help.html>

Thanks to David Parker for passing on this article from the Daily Mail.

**The ‘Small Hive’ project,** (You are invited to take part)

This is basically an idea for a ‘small hive’ which is intended to be managed with minimum input.

<http://www.smallhiveproject.eu/> David Parker

[**Bees 'go online' in Manchester**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/technology-41363465/bees-go-online-in-manchester)

This video clip shows how bees ‘are helping Manchester to become a healthier and smarter city’ (it does not explain what this means or how the bees will help to achieve it). New beekeepers may not know that fitting electronic chips and miniature transmitting aerials to bees, as shown here, has been done for a number or years in this country.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/technology-41363465/bees-go-online-in-manchester>

*Thanks to Richard Hignett and David Parker who both supplied this information.*

**The Bee Gym – an answer to varroa?**

I know with the National Honey show upon us soon many of us may be looking at the latest gadgets and one that caught my eye recently was the Bee Gym.  I thought I would see if there had been any research done on it – other than by the maker, and found this abstract of an article, and the full article, published earlier this year (*Journal of Apicultural Research Volume 56, 2017 – issue 1)*.

*Grooming is a honey bee behaviour that has the potential to minimize and manage the detrimental effects of Varroa destructor. Here we tested the efficacy of the Bee Gym™, a device hypothesized to increase honey bee auto-grooming and increase mite removal from colonies. Natural mite fall from 20 colonies was counted for 14 days, after which half the colonies were fitted with a Bee Gym and half with a control object. Mite fall and the proportion of damaged mites were then recorded for another 14 days. Total mite fall was generally higher over the second 14 days, but this increase was not significantly higher for the Bee Gym colonies than for the control colonies. There was also no difference in the proportion of damaged mites between the two treatments. Mite fall and damage to mites may be influenced by other factors, and this is discussed; however, given that we found no effect of the Bee Gym, we conclude that there is no evidence from this study of its efficacy as a management strategy for V. destructor.*

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00218839.2016.1260388>

What is even more surprising is that the researchers report that they had received funding from Stuart Roweth, the inventor of the Bee Gym for the research. He must be a disappointed man.

*Thanks to David Parker for drawing our attention to this paper. It seems to add grist to the idea of being cautious before believing what you hear (especially in beekeeping?).*

**Good news for beekeepers, sugar prices could be on the way down**

See the following:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-41412717>

David Parker

*If you read this you may find that it seems good for the profits of the producers as well, but what about the effects on the world’s health of all this extra sugar… ?*

**FOR SALE (with one entry advertising free items)**

Neither the Newsletter Editor nor Surrey Beekeepers Association take any responsibility for the accuracy of any of the following entries, or for the condition of any of the items advertised. If considering purchasing bees or secondhand equipment, the prospective purchaser should take great care to ensure that the bees are not diseased, and that all equipment is sterilised before use. Inexperienced purchasers should take a knowledgeable beekeeper with them.

**Local bees for sale**

Available now, overwintered 6-frame nucs and 12-frame colonies of British-bred Buckfast bees with brood in all stages and headed by marked, 2016 Buckfast queens from Ged Marshall. The bees are strong, healthy, gentle and hardworking; they are on clean combs and have been treated for Varroa. Currently housed in Payne’s poly nuc boxes, but if preferred can be transferred to your own hive.

Nucs from £150, Colonies from £200. Cash on collection, please.

Call Arran (Weybridge member) on 07713 629189.

**Hive components for sale**

I have a quantity of hive components – enough to make three hives – for sale at £5.00 per unit.  If interested contact me on phil@swan-walk.co.uk.

Phil Roberts

**Free bee equipment (a variation of Freebie)**

*We have received the following offer:*

Your (Editor’s) email address has been given to me by Andrew Halstead who I know as a provider of honey through the Chobham Market.  Knowing that, and having an amount of bee keeping kit which is no longer of use to me, I asked him for help in disposing of it which might be of use to someone.  All I have has been in dry store for at least fifteen years comprising standard and deep frames together with a few honeycomb frames plus WBC and Langstroth (?) lifts, smokers, etc.

 I ‘inherited’ all this from my father-in-law but working more than an hour away from home meant I did not give as much attention to the bees as I should and the moth got in and I never took it up again.

What I have is free to any member of Surrey Beekeepers on the basis that they take the whole consignment and discard what they don’t want.  From memory there are enough parts for seven hives but it has been a long time since I really looked at the kit.

If you are interested I will offer to try to quantify what I have – do let me know.

Guy Balcon 01276 85747

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| **Dates for your diary** |
| Wednesday | October11th | 7.30 pm | Talk on bees and pesticides by Prof Dave Goulson Walton-on-Thames  | p. 4 |
| Thursday-Saturday  | October 26th-28th | All day | National Honey Show, Esher | pp. 3 & 6NHS website |
| Thursday | October 26th | 6.30 pm | Central Association of Bee-Keepers Social event, Esher | p. 4 and attachment |
| Saturday | November 11th | 2.30 pm | Weybridge Beekeepers AGM | Details later |
| Friday-Sunday | November 17-November 19 | 5.00 pm9.30-4.30 pm | CABK Conference, Kenilworth | p. 4 and attachment |
| Sunday | November 19 | 9.00am for9.30am – 4.30  | Bee improvement for all WSBKA and BIBBA | September p. 4 |
| Saturday | December 2nd | 2.00 pm | Surrey BKA AGM, Croydon | Details later |
| Monday | January 22nd | 7.30 pm | First session of Beginners’ Course (Theory) | Details later |
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