



Registered Charity No. 1121231

Newsletter

February 2021

Editors Gwyn Marsh and Dorothea Jones

February Main Virtual Meeting

Stewart Spinks

Dealing with Grumpy Bees

23rd February 2021

7.30pm via Zoom

Many of you will know Stewart from his YouTube broadcasts on everything bees. Stewart started beekeeping in the 1980's and has gained a wealth of beekeeping experience and knowledge which he shares on his videos.

He is keen to pass his knowledge on to new beekeepers so they can learn and enjoy the pleasures of beekeeping. He supplies honey all over the country and queens and nuc's to local beekeepers.

He is a very engaging and informative speaker, and we are sure to learn some techniques for dealing with those hives we really don't like visiting!

A link will be sent out prior to the meeting.



Bucks County Beekeepers Virtual Spring Seminar

13th February 2021

Well done to the county committee for organising a very interesting and informative seminar. Three outstanding and engaging speakers, all experts in their own fields. Plenty of choice for breakout rooms, mine was very good. And there were raffle prizes – quite unexpected!

Be sure to sign up for the BBKA Spring Convention advertised below.

Spring Convention

16th – 18th April 2021

Covid might be restricting our freedom but it is not dimming our enthusiasm for talks and conferences. Rather, it is giving us the opportunity to hear speakers at local events, from around the world, from the comfort of our own homes.

See the flier below for the list of speakers and visit the BBKA website for more details of the speakers' themes, and how to apply for tickets.



The flier is enclosed in a black rectangular border. In the top left corner is the BBKA logo, a circular emblem with a beehive and the text 'THE BRITISH BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION' and 'FOUNDED 1874'. To the right of the logo, the text 'Spring 2021 Convention' is written in a purple, cursive font, with '16-18 April 2021' in a simple black font below it. On the right side of the flier is a large, simple line drawing of an armchair. Below the chair, the text 'The BBKA Spring Convention An Armchair Event' is written in a bold, purple, sans-serif font. At the bottom of the flier, the text 'The Spring Convention 2021 will be an on-line 'virtual' event' is written in a bold black font, followed by a list of speakers: 'Speakers include: Keith Delaplane (USA), Steve Pernal (Canada) and from the UK - Steve Martin, Celia Davis, Nicola Bradbear, Marin Anastasov, Jane Medwell, Rinke Vinkenoog, Colin Pavey, Lynfa Davies, Matthew Pound, Shirley & Richard Bond and more – Plus the Virtual Trade Show and Social Activity.' The final line of text at the bottom reads 'Visit www.bbka.org.uk for more news and event updates'.

Honey Labels

Apologies.

Following the labels article in last month's newsletter, I have been asked to point out that honey jar labels from the normal suppliers are fit for purpose and compliant.

I had no intention of implying they were not, I just wanted members to know there was an alternative, local source for labels.

Thank you, Graham.

2020 Southern Region Annual Report

The Southern Region Annual Report can be viewed by clicking the following [link](#)

If you have any issues viewing the link then the document can be downloaded from BeeBase on the following page: -

<http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/index.cfm?pagelid=168>

Kind regards,
National Bee Unit.

Changes to the Publication Date of the Newsletter

It has been decided to streamline the preparation and production of the newsletter. Publication of the newsletter on the club website will now be before the main meeting. The last date for contributions is the 2nd Friday of each month.

Missing Club Equipment

Please will whoever has borrowed the club refractometer return it!

We are fortunate to have a range of equipment for members to borrow at no expense and it's brilliant that so many people make use of this facility. I know that it is sometimes more efficient to pass borrowed equipment to a fellow beekeeper, saving unnecessary journeys.

Please, please remember to inform the equipment keeper if you pass it on.

Practical Beekeeping Course

Sean Stephenson is hoping to run a Practical Beekeeping Course this year Covid permitting. Each of the Bucks Associations can have a maximum of three attendees.

Dates - Part I **4 and 11 May**
Part II **5 and 6 June**

Requirements for attendees are:

Must have attained their Basic Certificate.

Kept bees for three (3) years.

Must not have done this course before.

Cost - £50 to include a queen cell and an apidea.

Full details and application form: -

<https://www.buckscountybeekeepers.co.uk/practical-skills-21/>

Support for Members During the Pandemic

With the third Lockdown still continuing the Committee has continued to meet to ensure that the club runs smoothly. We are aware that some of our members may be in need of extra assistance over the coming months until we are all able to move around safely again. Even if you have had your first vaccination you may feel that shopping for your bee essentials is not something you want to do right now.

If you are shielding, unwell or in need of assistance to look after your bees then please do contact us. We will do what we can, safely, to help. Please contact Helen Cave:-membership@chalfontsbeekeepers.co.uk

If you would like to be included in our planned bulk purchase of sugar for Spring Feeding (date to be confirmed) then please contact our Chairman, Gillian Jones - chairman@chalfontbeekeepers.co.uk

Flowering in my Garden Now



Winter Flowering Honeysuckle



Aconite



Verbena



Christmas Rose



Witch Hazel



Snowdrop

When the sun is fully on my hives on warmer days, the bees are flying and bringing in pollen. The greyish pollen they are carrying is, I think, from the snowdrops, but I haven't seen any bees visiting the flowers! The Hazel catkins are developing well and will probably produce masses of pollen as soon as the weather warms up.

Committee News

From Dorothie Jones

How we reach you

So, we have our lovely website and brilliant newsletter, but communication should be two-way. Of course, you can always get in touch by phone or email, but some of you may not know we also have a Facebook page, just search for Chalfonts Beekeepers' Members and you should find us.

Currently we don't have many views or generate much traffic, but we are going to try to boost it, so please visit and leave your comments, questions and photos to share with members.

We also have a forum page, in the members only area. Again, we haven't had many views or generated much activity, but whilst we are unable to meet it's an ideal place to start beekeeping discussions. Particularly useful is the Beginners forum, monitored by Jim Liness, where you can ask anything a new or nearly new beekeeper would like to know.

Remote Hive Monitor

Those of you who may have visited this via the website may be puzzled to see not a lot happening in our Beginners Apiary hives! This is because the monitor is currently not working (just at the time of year you want it!) Jim is working with the company to get it up and running again and we will let you know as soon as it is.

Club Secretary Vacancy

We are still looking for someone to fill this important role on our committee.

The basic job involves; Preparation and sending out of minutes and agendas, attending and taking minutes of our monthly committee meetings (currently on Zoom). Dealing with any correspondence and liaising with other committee members.

Enthusiasm and a willingness to devote your time is more important than being an experienced beekeeper. Extensive knowledge of bees is not required!

If you feel you could make a contribution to the running of your club then please contact our chairman Gillian Jones: -

chairman@chalfontsbeekeepers.co.uk Tel: 07773 366206

Gillian was previously club secretary and is now doing both jobs!

She will be happy to chat to you and fill you in on all the details of the role.

Postcode Groups

Following a successful trial by Jim Liness and Helen Cave in Amersham, we have divided our membership into postcode groupings, with a view to having regular Zoom 'get togethers' to chat.

These meetings will be hosted by a club member in your locality and you are welcome to join in, whether you are a long-standing member or a complete novice.

The groupings operating so far and contact details are as follows: -

WD3 (or any WD code)	Fiona Matheson	fiona.matheson.fm@googlemail.com
HP7	Jim Liness	apiary@chalfontsbeekeepers.co.uk
SL9	Mary-Chris	holycrosssamson@yahoo.com
Ley Hill and around	Sarah Peterson	sarah.peterson@live.co.uk

The meetings may be run slightly differently from each other and at whatever interval members of the group decide works for them. It will be very informal so don't worry about your level of knowledge. Just an opportunity to 'meet' other local members.

If you would like to join in with one of the above groups, or live in a nearby postcode, then please get in touch with the relevant group leader above. Some postcodes only have 1 member!

If you would like to start up a group in your area or are not sure which one to join, then please get in touch with Helen Cave: -

membership@chalfontsbeekeepers.co.uk

Importation of Bees

Following on from last month's information regarding the lifting of restrictions on the use of neonicotinoids post-Brexit, some of you may have been made aware of yet another petition doing the rounds. This asks you to sign to get the government to reverse their decision to ban imports of packaged bees and nucs.

Businesses have obviously been affected by this. There has been press and media coverage and some of you may have received emails about it.

Our concern is that there is some misinformation about honeybees attached to this petition which the public will read. The first claim is that honeybees in the UK are in decline (not true) and secondly, that importing bees helps boost pollinator numbers and combats colony losses to pests and diseases (also not true).

There is also a suggestion that the mental health of beekeepers is being affected during lockdown by depriving them of access to bees.

We feel that what is a business case, is being put forward as environmental and health concerns.

The BBKA have been campaigning for a long time to stop the importation of bees, particularly from places like Italy where small hive beetle is present.

"The British Beekeepers Association discourage the importation of queen bees and colonies from outside the UK." The advice is to buy your bees locally and raise your own queens. Latest information to help you understand the current situation can be found here: -

<https://www.bbka.org.uk/news/defra-publishes-blog-about-bee-importation-row>

Your committee fully supports the BBKA view and would like you to think carefully about what is being asked of you in signing any petition.

News from the Apiaries

Beginners Apiary

Our bees are all flying on warm days and Jim has replaced their fondant as required. As is common around this area at the moment, the ground is very boggy. Permanent puddles in places but the paving slabs and hives are stable. The Hive Monitor system has stopped working, Jim has checked/changed a number of things to no avail. Unfortunately, now would be a time when the information could be interesting. Jim will endeavour to get this working when temperatures allow.

BBKA Reader Survey

A big thank you to everyone who has taken part in the online readers' survey for BBKA News magazine. We have had some 1400 responses, but we want to hear from as many of our approx. 28,000 members as possible before the closing date of 28th February.

Would you be kind enough to share this email with your members to give them a last reminder to please take part? Here is the link:

<https://www.bbka.org.uk/news/bbka-news-reader-survey>

Thanks, in anticipation.

Kind regards

Leigh Sidaway, General Manager

Apiary site available

There is an opportunity to site hives in the following location: -

Wheatsheaf Farm, Seer Green 30 Acres of farmland and a wildflower meadow
Contact: Jenny Cartwright 07932 784753

Please make direct contact if you are interested. If you take up the offer, please let us know so that we can amend our records. Other offers are currently being investigated and will appear here in future issues.

If you are looking for somewhere to keep your bees or conversely know of any suitable sites, then please contact a committee member.

Advance Notice

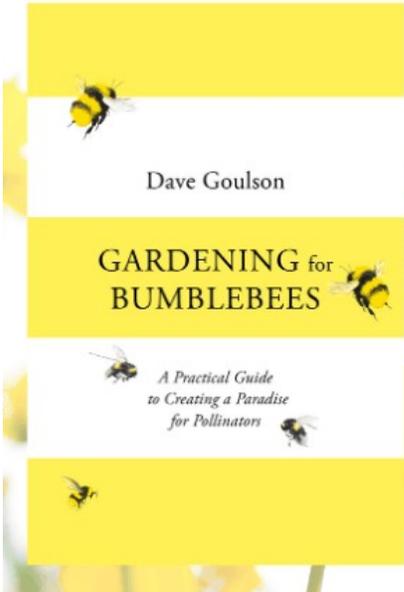
Gardening for Bumble Bees

1st April 2021

This event will no doubt compliment Sarah Wyndham-Lewis's 'Planting for Pollinators' talk at the Spring Seminar.

Further information and booking form can be found at: -

[Gardening for Bumblebees with Dave Goulson | Chiltern Bookshops](#)



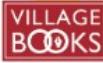
Dave Goulson

GARDENING for BUMBLEBEES

Thursday 1st April
7pm

Live Stream Event

Tickets:
£6 - Live Stream Only
£18 - Access to the live stream and a copy of 'Gardening for Bumblebees' (RRP: £16.99)

www.chilternbookshops.co.uk

**Future Club Meetings
2021
7.30pm on Zoom**

February 23rd

Stewart Spinks Norfolk Honey Co. Dealing with Grumpy Bees

March 23rd

David Evans aka The Apiarist Bait Hives for Pleasure and Profit

(David is currently writing the Readers' Questions Answered in BBKA magazine).

April 27th

Dr Julia Hoggard Bee Stings

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