



WOKINGHAM & DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Helping honeybees & beekeepers since 1946



website:
www.wdbka.org.uk
or scan the above code

Bee-news-ed

W&DBKA Newsletter

March 2024

(To contact the editor please e-mail wokinghambeekeepers@gmail.com)

Committee Meetings (Zoom)

The committee met on Wednesdays, 07 February and 06 March. The next meeting will be on Wednesday 03 April 2024. Don't hesitate to contact us if you want to join one of our Zoom meetings, either as a one off (to see what we do) OR to get involved in managing the Association.

Bowls Club Meetings, 14 February & 13 March 2024

Skep Talks:

The skep talks for the last two Wokingham Bowls' Club Meetings until October, were delivered by two of our more experienced members. At the February meeting Bob Loades' talk, Drones & Bee Space, explained how we could cater for the drones in our hives: benefitting the colony and the beekeeper. In March, Kevin Cowley's talk, Into The Spring, got us ready for the coming season with his thoughts on what we should be focussing on at this time of year.

Guest Speakers:

In February, Peter Higgs, founder of BeeGone ran through the back story to his company and outlined some of the problems (and solutions) that come from the live removal of honeybees from: chimney's, wall cavities, roof space and even hollow trees. The March speaker was Peter Dalby. Peter explained how adapting a method of swarm control gives the small-scale beekeeper a low cost method of rearing queens from his or her best colony.

Down at the Apiary

Apiary Manager, Mark, has been keeping bee-feed topped up as required, mending leaks and generally getting things ready for the coming season. Remember that this is a teaching apiary and a resource to take advantage of.

Come along to our weekly inspections, get involved and learn from the Association's bees and colleagues. The more the merrier! Newbies may want to take further advantage by joining our "Nurturing New Beekeepers" scheme we launched 07 March - contact us for the details if you didn't receive our email.

Have You Done the BBKA Basic Assessment Yet?

The thought of taking the Basic Assessment syllabus can seem daunting but close inspection of the syllabus will show that it merely lists the basic things that all beekeepers should know. If you have managed at least one colony for 12 months you are eligible to take the assessment - **so get in touch**. We hold a Revision session for all candidates before the Assessment in July - you are not on your own!

Dates for Your Diary

Even though the programme of monthly Wokingham Bowls Club meetings does not resume again until October there are still opportunities for us to get together and have a good chinwag about bees, beekeeping and anything else we feel like.

- April till September, get together with us on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month at the Two Poplars pub (off the Finchampstead Road, Wokingham) - 7pm onwards.



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- NOTE: *May & July each have FIVE Wednesdays: emails nearer the time will confirm which Wednesday we will be swarming at the pub.*
- BBKA Spring Convention: 12, 13 & 14 April 2024. Tickets were released on Monday 29 January 2024.
- 06 May, **Wokingham Lions May Fayre**. At our stall we will be skep making, demonstrating beekeeping (without bees), selling honey and promoting the Association. Why don't you come along for an hour or so?

On the Swarm List: Being a Responsible Member

IF you are one of the Association members on the swarm list PLEASE do your bit to make the scheme run smoothly for the swarm catchers and yourself. Follow the simple rules we send to those of you wanting a swarm. Below are some of them.

You will need hive equipment at the ready and be prepared to COLLECT the swarm the evening you are contacted. Return the catcher's equipment the following day. IF you are **going away get yourself removed** from the list - do the same if you no longer want a swarm. These simple courtesies can save a lot of work for collectors and organisers!

This year we are trialling the use of Whatsapp as a back up swarm allocation method, to help us when finding a home for a swarm is proving difficult. There is no pressure to join the group, but if you are happy to be contacted that way let us know.

Swarms in the News: 1969 and 2024

Swarms have frequently been in the news over the years. Bees interrupted one of the men's quarterfinal tennis matches at Indian Wells (California) on the 14th of this month (March 2024). Carlos Alcaraz and Alexander Zverev had to leave court when a swarm invaded the court. Alcaraz discovered that swatting bees with a tennis racquet makes a happy bee angry and earned him a sting to the head.

Back in 1969 the Berkshire Beekeepers' Federation newsletter reported that a Mrs Blackwood of Hollybush Ride, Finchampstead discovered a swarm of bees lodged underneath the chassis of her car. She drove home, slowly, without mishap and managed to hive the swarm later that evening. However driving out the following day she was pursued by "a large crowd" of very angry bees.

... And Finally... The Tax Man Cometh (Maybe)

Do you sell your honey? Should you be paying tax? According to a recent article in the Radio Times by Paul Lewis of Radio 4's Money Box, it depends on how much you sell and how you organise things.

Everyone can earn £1,000 a year from trading without paying tax. This is a turnover tax not a profits tax, so if your turnover exceeds £1,000 then HMRC would want to know because the excess is taxable. However if you treat it like a business and offset expenses against sales to get your profit, that profit is potentially taxable... however small.

For the full article go to: <https://www.radiotimesmoney.com/news/do-i-pay-tax-on-things-i-sell-online/>