

1923 - 2019



Medway  
Beekeepers  
Association

## Medway Beekeepers Association

Celebrating over 90 years of support for beekeeping  
and beekeepers in and around the Medway Towns



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## Newsletter January 2019

Happy New Year to you all, may this year be the best ever for you and your gals! This is a quiet month but we do need to check the mite drop on our colonies and treat if necessary. Also, don't forget to heft and check the stores. Feed fondant if you think your bees are getting low on food. Sorry to remind you all, but our annual subs are due this month and lastly don't forget to put the AGM date into your diary.

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### Past Event:

#### Saturday 15th December 2018

#### Indoor Meeting – Showing Products plus a Christmas tea.

Time: 2 – 5pm

Venue: Wainscott Community Hall, 16 – 18 Holly Road, Wainscott, ME2 4L



We divided the talk into two parts – Mark discussed honey, frames for extraction, sections and cut comb, while John did the wax block, candles, beeswax objects and mead. We wanted to show members that it is quite easy to prepare exhibits for a show bench and that there is a lot of help on offer to make it easier for you to start. After all, if you do not have a go then you will not see if you can win. Our Show is friendly and our Show Secretaries are there to help with answering questions. The main thing, which we both made a point of is to read the schedule before you start. Then decide what classes you want to enter. The members who do enter enjoy the experience and learn a lot about shows and showing. Your Show secretaries, Sue and John, are always looking for help for a member to be Judges Steward. Those members, who have done this in the past, have found the experience interesting.

The afternoon ended with a Christmas Tea provided by Jen and the offer to sample some Mead.

Mark Ballard and John Chapman.

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### Notes from The Apiary:

During the Winter the apiary is visited a few times a month to ensure all is well. I will assess the colonies to determine if feeding or varroa treatments are needed.

Mark Ballard

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## Education:

The Winter Study Group have reached the half-way point and settled down into a self-motivated and knowledgeable group; the mixed membership from 3 associations is a really positive aspect. The potential relaxation of the BBKA entry requirements means that more of the group may take the Module 2, "Honey Bee Products & Forage" exam next March. Preparations for the 2019 beginners' course are under way, we have 24 lined up and a waiting list. Inevitably this will stretch our ability to support them as they acquire bees and take up beekeeping; we will be asking current members to help newbies find their feet! More on ways you can be involved next year. Congratulations again to all who passed practical or theory exams during 2018 - we all need to keep learning!

I'd like to end this last education report of 2018 by expressing sincere thanks to the Education Team - Jen, Mark, Tony and Sheila with inputs from Elaine, Paul and John.

Bob Smith.

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## Bee Buddies

Some of those taking part in next year's introductory course will become beekeepers straight away and some will put the decision to start on hold for perhaps a year. Others may decide that the craft is not for them once they find out the cost and time commitment.

I'm sure you can recall the first two years of beekeeping when most of us made the most mistakes, some of them quite costly. This Introductory Course will enable these newcomers to get kick started, they will benefit from ongoing help and guidance as they progress and we are looking for bee buddies. Can you help?

We are looking for beekeepers, with a couple of years' experience, to be bee buddies and help guide this cohort. You will need to be willing to be shadowed when performing routine and/or difficult manipulations and just to be there on the end of the phone to answer questions or offer some guidance.

If you are interested, please contact me at: [tony.ed@me.com](mailto:tony.ed@me.com) - and I will try and link you up with a 'buddy'.

Tony Edwards

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## January's Events and Meetings:

### Monday 7th January 2019

#### Winter Study Group 6

Time: 7.00pm (7.30pm start)

Venue: Wainscott Community Hall, 16 – 18 Holly Road, Wainscott, ME2 4LG

We are half way through! We have covered the biology and pollination of plants, how pollen and nectar is collected and honey produced. In the New Year we will be moving on to look at producing honey and hive products for sale and showing.

This next session will be looking at preparation and bottling of honey, both liquid and set. We will also be looking at the preparation of other hive products for sale and for showing.

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## **Saturday 19th January 2019**

### **Indoor Meeting – Spring Preparation for the coming Season. Bob Smith**

Time: 2 – 5pm

Venue: Wainscott Community Hall, 16 – 18 Holly Road, Wainscott, ME2 4LG

"Spring is Sprung! Well, it will be soon perhaps?"

This talk will take a step backwards, to look at the preparations we made to over-winter our bees but principally look forward to the decisions and actions we take to help them transition from their semi-dormant state into the thriving colonies that will fill our supers. What are our priorities, the critical issues? Where can we help and where should we leave alone? Things can happen very fast....

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## **Monday 21st January 2019**

### **Winter Study Group 7**

Time: 7.00pm (7.30pm start)

Venue: Wainscott Community Hall, 16 – 18 Holly Road, Wainscott, ME2 4LG

This session is all about honey and how to maintain optimal product quality.

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## **Wednesday 23rd January 2019**

### **Bee Chat**

Come and share your stories and hear everyone else's!

Wednesday 23rd January at The Pier, Lower Upnor, ME2 4XA, at 7.30pm.

**Bee Chat will continue on the 4th Wednesday of every month and all are welcome to join us!**

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## **Future Events**

**Don't forget to put these in your diary:**

### **Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> February**

#### **BIBBA Sustainable Bees & Queens**

Time: 10am-4pm (bring your own lunch, refreshments provided.)

Lenham Community Centre, Groom Way, Lenham, Kent ME17 2QT

MBKA will be hosting this all-day course run by BIBBA about sustainable bees and queens "There is growing concern amongst beekeepers of all abilities and experience about the ever-increasing importation of bees and queens. This is on several grounds, including the possibilities of introducing pests, diseases and pathogens, aggression in subsequent generations and the unsuitability to our fickle climate."

The course is just £11, tickets are available via the BIBBA website:

<https://bibba.com/sustainable-bees-queens/>

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## **Saturday 16th February 2019**

### **MBKA Annual General Meeting**

Time: 2pm to 5pm

Venue: Wainscott Community Hall, 16 – 18 Holly Road, Wainscott, ME2 4LG

This year we have seen an increase in membership and we welcome all to attend, even if you've never been to a meeting before. The Agenda will be circulated by email to all

members ahead of the AGM. We encourage members to put forward questions to the committee ahead of the meeting.

Jen Ferry will be standing down this year from the committee and we are seeking nominations, self or third party to the Secretary in advance as voting will take place at the AGM.

Also, please remember that if your subs are not paid before the day of the AGM you will not be eligible to vote on any resolution under discussion.

Renewal Forms went out with last month's newsletter. However, if you have lost or deleted your copy please request a replacement from Paul at the address below.

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## **Saturday 16th March 2019** **Pre-owned Equipment Sale** **plus a Practical Session making Asian Hornet Traps.**

Time: 2 – 5pm

Venue: Wainscott Community Hall, 16 – 18 Holly Road, Wainscott, ME2 4LG

It's time for a spring-clean and shed clear out- come and join us at our first pre-owned equipment sale.

Bring your clean surplus equipment along on the day to sell but please no used frames. Sales will be in cash with a small percentage going to Association funds.

If you are looking to contract or expand your beekeeping operation this is the ideal opportunity to buy and sell kit! We will also be running a workshop to make Asian hornet traps and giving the opportunity for new beekeepers to practice their frame making skills.



**12, 13, 14th April 2019**

Harper Adams University  
Newport, Shropshire, TF10 8NB

Book in mid-January for the 42nd BBKA Spring Convention and enjoy the excellent facilities and catering available at Harper Adams University

- Lectures, Workshops and Seminars for all levels of beekeeping experience
- Trade Show on Saturday 13th April
- Beekeeping and Not-for-Profit Exhibition
- Excellent facilities and great value catering
- On-site, ensuite accommodation

For further Spring Convention information, FAQs, Tickets (wristbands) and Bookings visit:  
[www.bbka.org.uk](http://www.bbka.org.uk)

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## **Facebook**

Facebook enables us to reach members and the public quickly and provides a platform for interaction. Social media is becoming more and more a part of everyday life and a way of communication. Help us reach 100 followers- join our facebook page for information, updates and events <https://www.facebook.com/medwaybka/>

## Asian Hornet Update:



Visit: [www.nationalbeeunit.com](http://www.nationalbeeunit.com) for the latest updates.

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## And Finally:

A list of the meetings can also be viewed by going to: [www.medwaybeekeepers.co.uk/events](http://www.medwaybeekeepers.co.uk/events)  
Thank you to all who have contributed to this month's edition and remember if anyone has any news, ideas, amusing stories or comments or indeed suggestions about the website or for any future newsletter, please get in touch with me, Paul Lawrence at the address shown below, we really do appreciate your input.

## Contact Details:

### Chairman

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### Newsletter and Website Enquiries

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