

1923 - 2018



MBKA

Medway Beekeepers Association

Medway
Beekeepers
Association



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

Newsletter April 2018

Is this Spring I see approaching? Better start checking for space and any signs of problems. The swarm phone is now active so be warned!

Past Events:

Saturday 17th March 2018

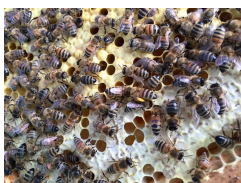
Sale of Second Hand Equipment plus a Workshop on making an Asian Hornet Trap

Time: 2pm to 5pm

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

This event was unfortunately cancelled due to adverse weather conditions.

April's Events and Meetings:



Saturday 7th April 2018

MBKA Apiary Open Day

2 – 4pm Association Apiary Site

You can find the apiary at 215a City Way, Rochester, Kent ME1 2TL

This is the first of the new season so why not come and see how our bees have survived the winter!



Spring 2018
Convention

13th to 15th April 2018

The 41st Spring Convention – 3-Day Event Organised by the BBKA

Harper Adams University, Newport Shropshire TF10 8NB

With 20+ lectures and 50+ workshops, the programme offers topics for beginners through to experienced apiarists and something for non-beekeepers too.



21st April 2017 English Festival

Venue: Riverside Country Park, Rainham

Why not come and help out at the English Festival run by Medway Council on Saturday 21st April. MBKA is going to be there interacting with the general public.

If you have honey or wax products to sell, please let me know that you are coming and are bringing products to sell. The usual 10% rate for sales via the Association will apply.

We will be rolling candles, so I am hoping for a nice sunny day to keep the foundation pliable – if not I shall be taking a hair drier to warm the wax! We need to be set up for 11am so helpers please arrive by 9am.

John Chapman

Wednesday 25th April 2018

Bee Chat

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

4th Wednesday of the month at The Pier, Lower Upnor, ME2 4XA, at 7.30pm.

Saturday 28th April 2018

A Talk by Celia Rudland – Spring Flowers for Colony Health

Celia is part of East Surrey Bees

Time: 2pm to 5pm

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

Saturday 28th April

All-Kent Bee Health Day

Time: 10am – 4pm

Venue: East Malling Village Hall ME19 6DD, 10-4pm

(The nearby Mid-Kent Apiary will also be used for part of the course)

This is a rare opportunity to take part in a course run in conjunction with the NBU Inspectors Sandra Gray, Kay Wreford, Michael Cooper and Mark Patterson.

Bob Smith

Future Events:

Tuesday 1st May 2018 (starting date – 6 weeks plus practical sessions) MBKA Introductory Beekeeping Course

For details contact The Secretary, Sheila Stunell: sjane.stunell@gmail.com



A Visit to Chapel Down Winery

Sunday 22nd July 2018, at 11.00am.
Small Hythe, Tenterden, Kent, TN30 7NG

If you would like to join us on this visit, the cost is £10 per person (non-refundable), partners & friends welcome. To book places please contact John Hendrie to pay and copy me in so that I can add you to the list. For bank transfers please contact one of us if you need bank details but if paying by cheque, John's address is 26 Coldharbour Lane, Hildenborough, Tonbridge, Kent, TN11 9JT. In this case will you also let me know you are coming so that I can keep an accurate list.

Chapel Down Winery is at Small Hythe, Tenterden, Kent, TN30 7NG and their website is <https://www.chapeldown.com/>

I'm looking forward to the tour and I hope you are too. If there is anywhere else you think would make a good location for us to visit, please do let me know.

Jen Ferry

jen.ferry@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk

The Winner of the MBKA Logo Competition:

Thank you to those of you who participated in the competition to find a new logo. The committee have reviewed the entries and the winner is:



Designed by Paul Lawrence

As part of the campaign to increase awareness of the Association and Beekeeping, MBKA attend several events throughout the season such as The English Festival, The Kent Show, The Ploughing Match & our own Honey Show. At these events we talk to people, demonstrate a hive and equipment, engage the children in candle rolling and sell hive products. The committee have agreed that a corporate image, which would make the beekeepers easily identifiable to the crowds, would help. So the new logo will be embroidered onto corporate polo shirts and sweatshirts. It has been agreed that the shirts will be sky blue and the logo dark blue.

If you would like to purchase one of these new Association Polo/Sweat Shirts please contact me to order them Polo Shirts £13 and Sweat Shirts £16. All the usual sizes are available.

Jen Ferry (phone: 07990 581858)

Now we have another one for you all!

Can you produce the ‘best drawn and filled’ Super Frame in the Association?

The Top Bar Competition:

For fun we are going to run a competition to see which of us can produce the best super frame but you don't get the luxury of choosing which of your frames look best for this competition.

We are going to give you all a **signed top bar** which you can make up into a super frame and put in one of your hives. At the end of the season, you present that frame at the **Autumn Fair** and whoever has managed to get their bees to produce the best frame will be declared the winner!!!

Towards the end of April, all members will receive, from a committee member, a BS top bar that has been signed, along with the instructions for the competition.

A few people are using **Langstroth Hives**, so if you could let John Chapman have one of your top bars to sign that would be good. Let the contest begin!

Jen Ferry

An Update from The Education Officer:

Several educational schemes are already under way or are planned; these are intended to provide challenge for members at all levels of experience

The **Winter Studies** group has met fortnightly throughout the winter; the “Improvers” course is now drawing to a close and will hopefully result in a more knowledgeable and competent group of beekeepers during the coming season. This was not an examination course; those attending drove the syllabus. The suggestion is that the next Winter Studies course will work to the BBKA Module 2 syllabus, “Honey Bee Products & Forage”, enabling those so inclined to sit that examination in March 2019. If this is of interest to you, please let me know.

Recruitment continues for a beginner's course – “**An Introduction to Beekeeping**” which will run for 6 weeks on a Tuesday evening, starting 1st May. Please let interested friends know about this opportunity; **Sheila Stunell** is collecting names.

The BBKA **Basic Assessment** is a straightforward certificated qualification that demonstrates one's ability to open a hive, manipulate the frames and perform basic tasks in a safe manner. There is no written work; it is simply a short session with an assessor at a hive, followed by oral questions on swarm control, colony tasks and bee health. Take a look at the full syllabus on the BBKA website – it is a long list but nothing is complicated.

We will be running a pair of sessions for those who meet the entry criteria and might like to undertake this assessment on 11th & 18th May, there will also be an apiary session as weather permits. **Jen Ferry** is collecting names for this one.

Please let me know if there are other educational or training matters you would like to see; we are developing a team of tutors to be able to support multiple offerings.

Bob Smith: education@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk

Swarm Collection Service 2018: We still need your help!

The Swarm Phone goes live this month and we still need helpers.

Any system, which is going to prove a success, ultimately requires manpower. We need to greatly increase the number of people who are willing to collect swarms within their area and people willing to accept some of the swarms that have been collected.

The more we have the less of a burden it will be on everyone.

If you are able to help with this vital task please contact John Chapman email:
john.chapman@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk

Please help us make this work for the benefit of both ourselves, and the residents of Medway.

Thanking you in anticipation
John Chapman (Chairman)

Mentoring: Experienced Beekeepers – we need your help!

We have several people signed up for the in house Beginners Course starting 1st May, and they, and other newish beekeepers, will all want Bee Mentors.

Mentoring is the best way for you to share your knowledge and consolidate your own learning whilst supporting those new to the art & science of beekeeping. If you have the BBKA Basic and would like to help by being a Mentor, to grow and develop both the Association and our newer members, please let me know.

If you would like to participate but do not yet have the BBKA Basic – we are running a FREE 2 session preparation course for this too so again, please let me know if you would like to do this.

Jen Ferry: jen.ferry@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk

A Request from Defra:

Dear Beekeeper,

Defra are seeking to develop a greater understanding of queen replacement practices currently carried out by beekeepers in England. At the link below you will find a short survey, which we encourage all beekeepers to complete.

The results of this survey will be factored into our consideration of future support options for English beekeepers.

Your assistance in improving our knowledge of this practice is greatly appreciated.

The survey will remain open until 16th April 2018.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/DefraQueenReplacementPracticesSurvey>

Kind regards

Defra Bee Health

A big thanks, to all who donated Mugs. We now have 4-dozen!

Jen Ferry

Beekeeper's Bazaar:

The following items are available for sale:

After nearly 60 years of beekeeping David Hopper is planning to downsize on the number of hives he looks after. Consequently over the next few months he will be looking to dispose of a variety of WBC and National Hives and other equipment.

If you need any equipment please have a word with him, either at one of our meetings or you can phone him for further information on: 01634 280622.

Spring Meetings:

We look forward to seeing you at this spring's meetings. A list of the meetings can be viewed by going to: www.medwaybeekeepers.co.uk/events

MBKA on Social Media:

If you would like to join us on Facebook please go to: www.medwaybeekeepers.co.uk and click on the Facebook or Instagram Icon.

Sonia Belsey

And Finally:

Whether you are old or new members, if you have any news, ideas, amusing stories or comments 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

John Chapman
john.chapman@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk

Newsletter and Website Enquiries

Paul Lawrence
paul.lawrence@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk