

# Harlow Bees-letter - January 2018

Upcoming Meetings - January 4 - AGM - Feb 1 - tbc



## Secretary Notices

**New Website** - We have a new website <https://harlowbeekeepers.wordpress.com/>

# Harlowbees

*Promoting and furthering the craft of beekeeping in Harlow and surrounding areas*

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It will replace harlowbees.co.uk in a short time once a few more technical matters are resolved; this will also remove the 3rd party adverts. It is slightly simplified from the existing site, losing some complexity on navigation links, some of the colours are still being worked on too.

If you have any ideas / suggestions they would be gratefully received; and offers to write pages even moreso.

**Christmas party** - last month was our party - We had a fun quiz with great prizes, followed by some lovely food.

## AGM

We also have a specific vacancy - Martin has found he can't make enough of the CEC meetings and so we need a new "Trustee / Divisional Voting Member"

We are also still looking for members who would be willing to be on the inspection rota for our divisional apiary at Parndon wood - please contact Pauline.

## Beekeeping Course

Our Annual course starts again 27th February 2018 for 5 weeks 8-10pm and 2 apiary sessions, only £50 or £90 for couples - You will have a printable advert attached with your newsletter this month, please post it where you can. For Further Information ring David on 07988 595054 or email

[davidmccorkindale@hotmail.com](mailto:davidmccorkindale@hotmail.com)

## Errata

In some email confusion last month, Roy's full piece was not published - Sorry Roy - here it is now below.

### Suddenly winter

This has been a long autumn with bees flying to bring in nectar, pollen and water. People keep putting me on the spot, expecting me to know where do they keep getting it? There are a lot of trees and shrubs in flower with no one plant dominating. In the Good Old Days we used to finish feeding mid-September.

Now the season is extended by a month. One young man was alarmed that he had no brood in October and was trying to buy queens. Each one of my fifty-eight years as a beekeeper is different. We can only be ready for what might come.

### Varroa

This is a mite which we imported from Asia. It is a pest in nearly all parts of the world. It came here in 1992 when it destroyed 19 of my 20 colonies. The mites bite adult bees and sealed brood and live off the body fluids. Undersized bees are produced and many have damaged wings caused by virus which the mite spreads. The cost to beekeepers is millions. We have ways of keeping the numbers down called Integrated Pest Management. A variety of chemicals is available together with mechanical methods. The

problem with chemicals is that the poor little mite spends only a third of its life on adult bees when they are effective. A popular choice is to heat oxalic acid and fill the hive with vapour. Best to get help with this equipment. Bayvarol and Apistan are less effective but some people say they are worth a try. Some chemicals are thought to kill the queen. The mite is attracted to drone brood. You can put in drone foundation (where can you get that?), or an empty frame or a super frame and pray the bees build comb and fill it with drone. As soon as it is filled with sealed brood it must be removed and given to the chickens or frozen or put in the solar wax extractor. When bees swarm, naturally or artificially, the cycle of reproduction of varroa is broken and the numbers drop dramatically. The varroa floor deals with mites which fall because they cannot get back up. The future is bright with hygienic bees which are resistant to varroa. In a few years varroa will be as rare as braula.

### **Comparisons are odious**

When the useless native black bee was killed off by the Isle of Wight disease we imported bees from the Continent. Many were vicious. We are still suffering and need to protect ourselves. Gradually the bees are less defensive and for the most part can be worked without the great leather gloves. Not needed as a Christmas present. I rarely wear gloves, and then only the washing up ones. Abroad they wear little protection, shorts, flip-flops, sleeveless T-shirt. They laugh at all our gear. Here a hood is essential.

Roy Copley

### **For sale**

#### **Buckets**

- Honey buckets £2

David Tyler (01279 730228)

#### **Wax for sale**

Roy Copley (01992 626668)

### **Division committee**

**President** Danny Nicoll

**Chairman & Librarian** David Tyler

**Vice Chair** David McCorkindale

**Secretary & Web Editor** Nick Holmes

**Treasurer** Pauline Tidmas

**Divisional Trustee** Martin Cavalier

**Swarm Liaison & Spray Liaison** David Swindale

**Training Liaison** David McCorkindale

**Council Liaison** Brian Bull

**Newsletter** Nick Holmes

**Mailing Officer** Lisa McCorkindale