



# Harlow Bees

## April 2020

### Newsletter



## ALL HBKA MONTHLY MEETINGS ARE CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

### Secretary Notices:

As you are all aware, we are living in unprecedented times. The whole world is currently going through a huge period of change and are having to adapt our lifestyles and routines, to avoid the risk of infection from the Coronavirus or COVID-19.



To minimise the risk of infection, all meetings, events, courses and general gatherings have been cancelled until further notice. This includes all Beekeeping related events. This is an essential decision to protect and keep our friends, families and colleagues safe until a vaccine has been discovered, the virus has passed or it is destroyed.

**Remember:** Wash your hands regularly using soap and warm water whilst singing 'Happy Birthday' twice!! Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Stay away from groups of people and anyone with a cough, fever or displaying flu-like symptoms. Familiarise yourself with the symptoms of Coronavirus. Make sure you have food should you need to self-isolate for 14 days and finally, **ensure that you have the contact details for at least 2 x beekeepers that live near your hives who are happy to manage your bees, in case you are in self-isolation.**

If you think you have the symptoms of Coronavirus and cannot get out to inspect your bees, please ensure that you have arrangements in place for someone to check your bees. If not, send a message through the HBKA google email to see if anyone is available to help, or if you have questions in general. Please do not contact the HBKA or BBKA to coordinate assistance. Many people are now working from home, self-isolating or supporting dependants and families and will not be able to assist.

We do not know how long we are going to be under threat. Until we hear anything to the contrary, we urge everyone to try and maintain a normal but safe routine, look after the bees, refer to the HBKA website for updates, stay in contact with our fellow beekeeping friends (by telephone or email!) and stay safe. Before we know it, we'll be back to our regular meetings! So, back to the beekeeping task in hand...!

The meeting in March started with an EGM to elect new officers for unfilled positions. Bihn Nguyen is our new Training Officer, Pamela Chambers is our Bee Health Officer and David Tyler has agreed to temporarily take on the role as Asian Hornet Coordinator. We still need someone for this role, so if you would be able to fulfil this role, please contact David.

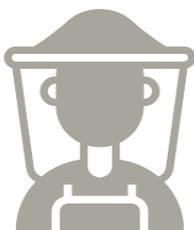
Mike Morgan gave an update on the progress made so far, regarding the preparations for the 2021 Conference that we (HBKA) originally planned to host on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2021. To date he has been investigating venues, speakers and extra funding opportunities. However, this has been postponed until further notice.



The talk about EFB was very relevant and aptly timed for this month. Salma clearly described how to recognise the difference between AFB and EFB, the diagnosis and the usual treatment of destruction of the colonies by burning. This was followed by methods of hive hygiene at this time of the year. Poly hives can be bleached and wooden hives scorched. Frames should be replaced every 3 years or when they are darkened. Two methods were described – the *Shook Swarm* (recommended for strong colonies) and the *Bailey Comb Method* (for weaker colonies). The latter method takes longer but is less brutal on the colony. As well as being a method of routine hive hygiene these methods are a good way of controlling varroa, which weakens colonies and makes them vulnerable to pathogens. It was recommended that we plan for integrated pest management each year and a combination of the above would be effective.

Full instructions for the methods described are on the BBKA website and Bee Base has a varroa calculator if have carried out a count. General apiary hygiene was discussed and it was recommended that a disease inspection was carried out at the beginning and end of each season.

### Beekeeping notes for April:



The weather during March was pretty cool, but on sunny days the bees were starting to venture out of the hives and complete 'cleansing flights'. The foraging bees were returning to the hives with pollen baskets loaded with pollen, indicating that the colony is starting to build up in readiness for better weather.

**April Forage:** Apple, Berberis, Blackthorn, Broom, Cherry, Cherry laurel, Chickweed, Currant, Dandelion, Gorse, Hazel, Henbit, Horse Chestnut, Ivy, Leopard's bane, Lungwort, Mustard, Peach, Pear, Plum, Primrose, Rosemary, Sycamore, Willow and Yellow crocus.

## Apiary Jobs for April:

- Heft hives and check that the colonies of bees still have plenty of food
- Put pollen patties and/ or fondant on bees if food is low/ light sugar syrup
- On a warm, sunny, still days start inspecting the bees every 10/ 7 days
- Treat for Varroa, if necessary
- Start making up frames of foundation
- Start Queen rearing preparations
- Keep a look out for Asian Hornet Queens looking for new nest sites



## Did you know?



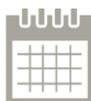
**Famous Beekeepers:** many of you will already know that TV personality and Antiques Roadshow expert Bunny Campione, is a fellow Beekeeper! Ms Campione regularly opens her Suffolk garden for public views, championing sustainable and organic gardening and promoting bees via educational seminars and events!

**Curious Corner:** Did you know that when the Turks tried to conquer Székesfehérvár (central Hungary) under the Sultan Murat, the inhabitants as a last resort, protected themselves by throwing hives of bees on the attackers! The bees... 'finished off what they could not accomplish...!' Savage!

**Customs, superstitions, myths and folklore:** in Guernsey, when the owner of the hives dies, the person nominated to inform the bees must tap on the hive with the key of the house and if the bees answer with a hum, the bees will remain and work for their new master.

**Bad Bee joke of the month:** What did the spider say to the bee? Your honey or your life...!

## Other dates for your diary:



**ALL COURSES, EVENTS, MEETINGS AND FETES ARE CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

## Divisional Library:

David Tyler is the Library Monitor for the ever-growing library. David brings the books to every meeting and EBKA members can borrow the books – have a browse and see what takes your fancy! *But remember not to hang on to the books for too long, as other people may be waiting to read them – especially if they are studying for BBKA examinations!*



## Jars for Sale:



**Bulk Honey Jar Orders:** Orders can only be made annually, so *orders can be made from May 2020.*

## For Sale:

**Used Wax & honey separator pail – still available for sale and it is a bargain!** – a new one from National Bee Supplies is £96.75. Any offers over £50 (*extra will go to HBKA funds*). Any offers...?



## Items always available for Sale

Items for sale:	Price:	Contact:	Telephone no.
Honey Buckets:	£ 2.00 each	David Tyler	01279 730228
Wax:	Various	Roy Cropley	01992 626668

## Committee Members

Position:	Name:	Position:	Name:
President:	Danny Nicoll	Spray Liaison:	Ben Hart
Chair/ Librarian:	David Tyler	Council Liaison:	Ralph Cullen
Vice Chair:	Mike Barke	Training Officer:	Bihn Nguyen
Secretary:	Carol Sissons	Bee Health Officer:	Pamela Chambers
Membership:	Pauline Tidmas	Asian Hornet Co- Ordinator:	David Tyler
Treasurer:	Sue Frazer	Website:	Nick Holmes
Swarm Liaison:	David Swindale	Newsletter:	Pamela Chambers