



# Harlow Bees December 2020 Newsletter



HBKA MONTHLY MEETINGS HAVE RESUMED VIA ZOOM.

**\*\*NEXT MEETING = THURSDAY 3rd December 2020 19.00 hrs - Zoom Christmas Party!!\*\***

*...Bring a drink and nibbles along to the next HBKD online meeting...!!*



**COVID-19 update:** To minimise the risk of infection, all physical meetings and gatherings are still cancelled. Please wear your face mask in public, regularly wash your hands and maintain a normal but safe routine – *stay connected: stay safe*

## Secretary Notices:

We had an interesting November meeting via Zoom, with approximately 12 people joining the meeting to ask questions and share their ideas on any problems they have with their bees - it was lovely to have Danny join us, too! It was unfortunate that our speaker had to cancel but we hope to re-book him for next year.



We followed the general monthly meeting with a committee meeting. We identified and confirmed the vacancies which will become available at next month's AGM. I have to stand down as Secretary but I am very willing to support my successor until they are up and running. Descriptions of other vacancies are listed below.

**Vacancies:** We have 5 available committee posts - Chair, Secretary (incl. Show Secretary), Membership Secretary, Librarian and Newsletter co-ordinator. If you are interested in offering your skills to any of the advertised roles, please refer to the HBKD website or contact David, Carol, Pauline or Pam for more information. The next AGM will be on **7th January 2021** (next month) and new committee members will be voted in then. It would be great to have a large and diverse committee to take us into the New Year – and beyond!

We also need 'ad hoc' volunteers! We need HBKD members to help look after the bees at the Parndon Wood Apiary and to help organise outdoor events (once these are up and running again). *'...Many hands make light work'...!*

As we are now all a little more confident with the Zoom meetings, we are hoping to be able to run a Beginners Beekeeping course next year, subject to restrictions being lifted. 2021 is looking bright!! In the meantime, as we are unable to physically meet, many associations are arranging 'online' meetings and lectures. These are being advertised and promoted via the regular 'Harlow-bees-Google-group' email notifications, various Essex Beekeeping Associations and BIBBA online invitations and can also be found on [Eventbrite and https://beekeeping.events/](https://beekeeping.events/). We are all welcome to attend.

And finally – our next online meeting is December 3<sup>rd</sup>. We would love it if you would all attend this last zoom meeting of the year so that we can all see each other again! Feel free to bring along nibbles, party hats and celebratory beverages to the online meeting, so that we can get into the party spirit and toast the coming holidays! In the meantime....

**The HBKD Committee would like to wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas!**

## Beekeeping notes for December:



- Check hive entrances are clear of dead bees and debris and monitor Varroa mite drop from hives. Heft hives to check food stores.
- At the end of the month/ early January, apply Oxalic Acid treatments against Varroa, if this is part of your bee health plan.
- Order in or make fondant/ pollen patties for late winter/ spring – before the rush!
- Clean up, repair and store away redundant equipment.
- Order and plant up bee-friendly Spring bulbs, such as Snowdrops, Aconites, Crocus, Tulips, and Daffs etc – although it might be a bit late now...
- Check you are registered on BeeBase and that your details are up to date.
- **Arrange and pay for your Bee Craft and HBKD January 2021 subscription (regretfully, we cannot accept cash – COVID.....).**
- Keep in touch with your fellow beekeeping chums: HBKD zoom meetings and Essex online meetings.

**December Forage:** Aconites, Alder, Christmas Rose, Evergreen Clematis, Cyclamen, Dandelion, Dogwood, Heather, winter flowering Honeysuckle, Ivy, Mahonia, Primrose, Strawberry Tree, Thistle, Viburnum, Willow and Winter Box.

## Did you know?

**Famous Beekeepers:** Pope Francis (1936 – present) owns several beehives. The hives reside on the Vatican Farm, Castel Gandolfo. Nowadays, the focus is on the pollination of the vegetables, fruit and the 800 year old Olive trees that are grown on the self-sustaining organic estate. This has been the summer residence for the papal team since the 16<sup>th</sup> century – although I assume that the bee's main duty back then would have been to produce copious amounts of beeswax – think all those church service candles!



**Curious corner:** Spare a thought for the bees and other pollinating insects when you are preparing and enjoying your Christmas lunch. They will have pollinated some of the food that fed the Turkey, Pigs and Cattle (field beans); the herbs and ingredients in the stuffing; the leafy greens and sprouts; the various nuts (chestnuts, almonds) and spices that you will enjoy; the apples and oranges that will be in many dishes and the honey that marinated, flavoured and sweetened the dishes and of course, the Mead!

How many Christmas lunch ingredients can you think of that have been pollinated by insects and how many by honeybees alone...?

**Folklore:** English Farmers used to put sprigs of Holly on their beehives and believed that the bees made a humming sound in honour of the Christ Child. In Ireland, it was believed that it was only those that had never sinned, that could hear the song – apparently the 100<sup>th</sup> psalm...!?

**Bad Bee joke of the month:** What carol do Bees sign at Christmas? ‘Oh, Christmas Bee – Oh, Christmas Bee...’. (I’ll get me coat...!)

**Other dates for your diary:** ***ALL COURSES, EVENTS, MEETINGS AND FETES ARE CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE, unless an online alternative is available.***

**Divisional Library:** David Tyler is the Library Monitor for the ever-growing HBKD library, until the end of the year. David is planning to store away his Rolodex filing card system for good, so **we need a new Library monitor.** If you would like to take on this role within the committee and look after the collection of bee-related books, please contact David for more information.



## Jars for Sale:



Heavily discounted and bulk orders of honey jars can be made through the HBKD in time for next year's summer honey harvest, **from May 2021**. If you require jars in the meantime, purchase direct from BBKA recommended suppliers who also offer discounts to BBKA members.

## For Sale:

| Items for sale: | Price:      | Contact:    | Telephone no. |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| Honey Buckets:  | £ 2.25 each | David Tyler | 01279 730228  |
| Wax:            | Various     | Roy Cropley | 01992 626668  |

**Used Wax & honey separator pail – THIS IS A BARGAIN! It would make a great Christmas present?! A new one from National Bee Supplies is £96.75 – offer more than £50 and any extra will go to HBKD funds.**

## HBKD Committee Members (current vacancies highlighted in yellow):

| Position:                   | Name:                 | Position:             | Name:                  |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| President:                  | Danny Nicoll          | Council Liason:       | Ralph Cullen           |
| <b>Chair person:</b>        | <b>David Tyler</b>    | Swarm Liason:         | David Swindale         |
| Vice Chair:                 | Mike Barke            | Spray Liason:         | Ben Hart               |
| <b>Secretary:</b>           | <b>Carol Sissons</b>  | Training Officer:     | Bihn Nguyen            |
| <b>Membership:</b>          | <b>Pauline Tidmas</b> | Bee Health Officer    | Pamela Chambers        |
| Treasurer:                  | Sue Frazer            | Asian Hornet Co-ordin | Louise Carr            |
| Apiaries Manager            | David Tyler           | <b>Newsletter:</b>    | <b>Pamela Chambers</b> |
| <b>Divisional Librarian</b> | <b>David Tyler</b>    | Website:              | Nick Holmes            |
| Swarm Liason:               | David Swindale        |                       |                        |

