

# Welwyn Beekeepers Newsletter

## March 2018

### NEWS SUMMARY

With the "Beast from the East" and storm Emma a thing of the past, life might just get back to normal... and we are looking forward to:

- Starting the Beginners, Swarm Control and Basic assessment courses
- Attending the Oaklands College Lambing Weekend, St Albans AL4 0JA on Sunday March 11
- Providing refreshments at the HBKA Spring Show and AGM on March 24 at Christchurch Peartree, AL7 1BW

We have been busy with:

- Our social evening on February 13
- The WBKA Open Forum and AGM on February 20
- Repairing the fence and the WGC Allotments

Regular items:

- Thoughts from the Beekeeper
- Around the Apiaries (will start again in spring)
- Training
- Events

### Open Forum & AGM

A big thank you to the members who attended the Open Forum and AGM. Main points addressed were:

- All committee members - Phill Jepson (Chairman), David Chenery (Vice-Chairman), Andy Crossley, Peter Folge (President), Mike Goodhew, Lieva Nation and Gabriela Ross as well as Rachel Leech (membership secretary) and John Peacock (Auditor) offered their services again and were re-elected.
- The accounts show a healthy balance and it was agreed to keep saving money with the view of potentially being able to afford a plot of land that could provide an apiary as well as a place where a shed/association base could be set up that could be used for training and socials.
- The last and the current year's training, search for new apiaries, fairs/shows and social events were discussed. An appeal has been made again for members to come forward and offer their time to help out.
- A number of suggestions/ideas to improve the bee awareness of the public, how to help schools, additional training courses have been mentioned and will be looked into by the relevant members who made the suggestions and by the committee. Progress updates to follow.

[www.welwynbka.org](http://www.welwynbka.org)

Save the date

**Sunday July 1**

### **Panshanger Park Walk**

accompanied by 2 guides explaining the history of the site and helping us to spot the local wildlife

Followed by either a picnic or lunch in a local pub

### **WGC Allotments**

Some of our funds have been used to repair the fence panels shielding the hives at the WGC allotments. An excellent job has been done - see the before and after pictures below.



## **Social: February 13**



### **Talk "Where the wild things are"**

The evening started with the talk by Jan Klapwijk from the Wildlife Trust which was very interesting, informative and well received by the Welwyn and other branches' members. It provoked a lively exchange of thoughts with how our bees also link into the whole aspect of wildlife and what should be done to preserve it as much as we can.

### **Bee Improvement Programme**

In the second part of the evening, Peter Folge informed us all how he envisages the bee improvement programme to continue this year. WBKA will purchase another 3 Danish queens on top of hoping to graft from the queens purchased last year. Furthermore, we will be encouraging the queens to lay drone brood and frames of unhatched drone brood can then be distributed amongst members. By distributing drone brood throughout our area it is hoped that virgin queens mating with these drones will over time change/improve the bees.

Members may also order queens directly from the Danish Buckfast's website [www.buckfast.dk](http://www.buckfast.dk). Should you wish to do so please keep Peter Folge informed. Peter would like to inspect any queens purchased and in order for the programme to be successful it is important to have the complete overview. Peter has sent out the first email to all members that expressed interest in participating. Should you wish to join to please contact Peter at [The\\_beekeeper@hotmail.com](mailto:The_beekeeper@hotmail.com).

### **Event: Oaklands College Lambing Weekend, March 10-11**

This will be the first and a new event we will be attending this year. The event is held on both Saturday and Sunday and we have been invited to be present on Sunday. St. Albans Beekeepers will attend Saturday. Please see <https://www.oaklands.ac.uk/news-events/events/detail/2018/03/10/default-calendar/lambing-weekend> for further information.

### **Please help our New Beekeepers**

We will be emailing you to ask if you will become a Bee Buddy if you haven't already.

At the Beginners Course we will be emphasising to only start beekeeping once new beekeepers feel confident, but we all know what it was like starting out Beekeeping, and just being able to receive a quick piece of advice at the end of a phone is invaluable.

### **National Honey Show 2018**

The National Honey Show will take place from October 25 – 27, 2018 at Sandown Park, Esher. See the attached email for more information.

### **Thoughts from the Beekeeper**

*By Peter Folge*

Where have the weeks gone!..... March is the time where bees normally start brood-raising at a great pace. In doing so they start consuming their stores very quickly and from now on it is very important to keep an eye on food reserves. Heft hives to check the weight of the colony. Some beekeepers will begin spring cleaning on a mild day, when bees start flying, by replacing floor boards with new clean ones. This gets rid of any dead bees and rubbish that may have built up on the floor over winter. I would leave mouse guards and netting in place until end of March, especially this year.

It's also a good time to look at some 'B' videos on YouTube. There are some good ones such as:

Stuart from the Norfolk Honey Company and Lectures posted by The National Honey Show

Until next month...

### ***Forthcoming EVENTS with WBKA involvement***

Sunday, March 11, 10 am – 3 pm	Oaklands College Lambing Weekend, St Albans
Monday, April 9, 2-5pm	Easter Activities, Welwyn Roman Baths
Saturday – Monday, May 5-7	Herts Garden Show, Knebworth House
Saturday and Sunday, May 26 & 27	Hertfordshire County Show, Redbourn

### ***Training***

#### ***For Non Members/New Members Interested in or Contemplating Beekeeping***

##### **March 2018 Beginners Beekeeping Course**

Tuesday Evenings 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> March, practical session Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> March, at Christchurch Parkway Halls WGC, Apiary session in April tbc

Course started on March 6, please contact Mike Goodhew at [training@welwynbka.org](mailto:training@welwynbka.org) if you are able to help out on one of the course nights.

#### ***For Members***

##### **Swarm Collecting course**

Do's and don'ts, what to expect and equipment to use.

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2018 – 7.30 to 10pm - £5  
Christchurch Peartree Halls, Tewin Road, Welwyn Garden City AL7 1BW

##### **Basic Assessment Preparation course**

A very useful 2 evening check point for those with at least 2-3 years' experience. Ideal preparation for BBKA Basic Assessment.

Wednesdays 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> March 2018 – 7.30 to 10pm - £10  
Christchurch Peartree Halls, Tewin Road, Welwyn Garden City AL7 1BW

##### **Healthy Bee Day**

Presentation by Regional Bee Inspectors providing up to date information regarding pests, diseases and associated actions and treatment. Intended for beekeepers with at least 2 years+ experience.

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> May, 9.30 am - 4 pm,  
University of Hertfordshire's Bayfordbury Campus

*WBKA has been allocated 14 places for this event which have been filled up. We are keeping a reserve list in case of cancellations or additional places if other branches do not take up their full allocation.*

If you would like to attend any of these courses and haven't already applied, please email Mike Goodhew at [training@welwynbka.org](mailto:training@welwynbka.org).