

Honey Fraud

One third of international traded honey is adulterated or 100% fake.

To correct this the Honey Authentication Project (HAP) was initiated a few years ago. HAP is an international sum of efforts of people and organisations whose fundamental interest is to stop honey fraud, in order to avoid affecting the rights of producers and consumers, as well as the environment, bees and health. The work it carries out through linking legal, media, social and scientific actions is aimed at creating a new regulatory and control frame that prevents the commercialisation of false honey that is so damaging to people and the planet.

HAP has produced three reports that can be downloaded from <https://www.honeyap.org/index.php>. They make for interesting and somewhat disappointing reading as some of our leading brands have been found wanting.



Honey Authenticity Network UK has been set up to support this initiative. You can keep up to date by following HAN UK on Facebook.

Mentoring New Beekeepers - Help Please

An initiative by Yorkshire BKA is bringing together the Education Officers of the 73 area associations from across the country to discuss the early stages of being a beekeeper.

The first meeting last month covered Beginners/Introduction courses. From this we learnt that the courses run by the four branches in WBKA are very similar to those in other counties.



December's session is looking at Mentoring and your views would be much appreciated. The questions being asked are:

- As a new beekeeper or when you were a beginner, what would you want/have wanted your mentor to do? *List up to 5 requests.*
- As an experienced beekeeper asked to design a half day training course for new mentors, what 4 topics would be on your agenda?

Please e-mail your views to education@wiltshirebeekeepers.co.uk before Monday 13th December.

Basic Assessment. In January the topic is the Basic Assessment. If you have been keeping bees for two or more years and have not yet taken the Basic Assessment (the equivalent of the Driving Test for beekeepers but much easier), it would be interesting to know what obstacles are preventing you from having a go? **Views as above.**

BBKA Annual Delegates Meeting (ADM) - The Members Have Their Say



The BBKA is a charitable membership organisation. As such it is the members that direct how the charity is run. Every January all 73 area associations appoint a delegate to attend the ADM. Our delegate will be David Newell from West Wilts BKA. David has been our delegate for several years and is fully aware of how these meetings are run and how best to ensure that our interests are fully represented.

The next meeting is being held on 15th January 2022. At that meeting delegates will:

- Hear reports from the Board of Trustees, who are charged with carrying out the wishes of the membership as decided at the ADM.
- Approve, or otherwise, the Financial Statement for the year ending 30th September 2021.
- Approve, or otherwise, the Budget for the current financial year.
- Elect a new President. The President is elected for a period of two years so a 'presidential vote' is normally only held every other year.
- Elect four new trustees. In recent years this has been a foregone conclusion as the number of applicants has matched the vacancies. That is not the case this year and there are some strong candidates up for election.
- Elect new members to the Examination Board. Again there are some strong candidates.

They will also consider proposals from Area Associations.

- The first three have been scheduled by Devon BKA and are about the adulteration of imported honey. The BBKA is being asked to take this up with both Trading Standards and the Government.
- The next is from Buckinghamshire BKA asking the BBKA to produce material to help County Associations participate fully in national events such as Asian Hornet Awareness week and Bee's Needs Week.
- Two proposals from Hampshire BKA call for the BBKA to strengthen its opposition to the importation of honey bees.
- Finally the BBKA has tabled four rather technical proposals seeking changes to the BBKA's constitution.

There is more detail on Page 415 of December's BBKA News. The full set of papers for the meeting is on the BBKA News website bbkanews.com. To access login with your BBKA membership number and your post code, click on "Select Publication" and select 'BBKA Documents'. If you wish to put forward your own views on any part of the agenda, please pass your comments to one of your Branch's representatives on the WBKA Council.

As our delegate, David Newell needs guidance on how to vote. This will happen at the meeting of Wiltshire BKA's Council on 13th December when all these issues will be discussed by your branch delegates. However it is not possible for Council to be fully aware of all the pros and cons on every agenda item so David is given some leeway to adjust his vote having listened to the discussion during the day. We wish him luck and look forward to receiving his post meeting report.

Beekeeping Tips

Weather. As I write there is a flurry of snow driven by a near gale force north westerly wind. The snow doesn't settle but the outside temperature is 0°C; with the wind chill it feels more like -5°C. The hives in the garden are well protected from the wind but I nip out to check that they are still up right. When last hefted they were all reasonably heavy so it would be a surprise if they had come to grief. All is well.

Feeding. Safe to say that the bees will be in tight cluster so there will not be much activity within the hive. It is estimated that in the months of November, December and January the bees are unlikely to consume more than a kilogram of stores per month. Thereafter the amount consumed increases significantly month on month. That said all my colonies now have a slab of fondant on just in case.

Varroa Treatment. The key to successful treatment of Varroa at this time of year is to know when the colony is broodless or at least very low in brood. No brood means that all the Varroa will be on the adult bees and at their most vulnerable to the oxalic acid. If you leave the varroa trays in place and check them every few days, the cappings on the tray will show you if there is still brood around, the position of the cluster and the level of Varroa in the colony. My colonies are split 50:50 brood:no brood but given the weather it is unlikely any of the queens will be laying perhaps for a while. Hopefully there will be a reasonably mild day between now and the winter solstice on 21st December. After that as the days lengthen the queens should come back into lay.



Wiltshire Bee and Honey Day 2021 - Talks

The Talk by Dr Guy Parker on how solar farms can set an example for diversity in the environment is now available to view online at: <https://uk.edenrenewables.com/news/2021/10/25/ecologist-talk-on-solar-pollinators-benefits-video>

Education

WBKA - Courses

Module 3: Honey Bee Diseases, Pests and Poisoning. 22 members attended the first session of this course on 22nd November.

Honey Bee Health Certificate. This is a practical assessment but it requires a good knowledge of honey bee diseases and pests. Two half day practical sessions will be held in April/May 2022 for those that apply to take the assessment. If you are interested contact :

education@wiltshirebeekeepers.co.uk.

NDB Short Courses

Microscopy. 11-12 December 2021
Cirencester

Bee Behaviour. 19-20 February 2022
North Wales

To register: <https://national-diploma-beekeeping.org>

BBKA Courses

The BBKA is offering four new courses in 2022:

Microscopy Beginners. One day - Saturday or Sunday 26th or 27th February 2022.

Microscopy Intermediate. Two days 26th and 27th February 2022.

Queen Rearing. Saturday 23rd April 2022.

Bee Handling and Husbandry. Five days - Monday 25th to Friday 27th April 2022.

Details available on the BBKA website: <https://www.bbka.org.uk/pages/shop/department/training-courses>.

Dates for the Diary

Wiltshire BKA

WBKA Council. The council is due to meet on Tuesday 7th December 2021.

WBKA AGM and Winter Lecture. 7pm on Thursday 20th January 2022 at the Devizes Corn Exchange. This is an important meeting that members are very much encouraged to attend. It will be followed by a talk by Marin Anastasov NDB on *Preparing for Spring Build Up - Colony Management*. Details to follow.

WBKA Honey Bee Health Day. Saturday 3rd September 2022. Every three or four years our Regional Bee Inspector brings a team of Seasonal Bee Inspectors to Wiltshire for a day of talks and demonstrations covering all aspects of managing honey bee diseases. Not to be missed.

Wiltshire Bee and Honey Day. Saturday 8th October 2022 at the Devizes Corn Exchange. Another fun-packed day with expert speakers, trade stands, honey beer, honey sales and the annual honey show. Volunteers will be needed and every member should consider entering at least one item in the honey show.

BBKA

BBKA's Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM). David Newell from WWBKA will represent WBKA at this event on 15th January 2022.



BeeTradex 2022. BeeTradex is back and scheduled to be held at NAEC Stoneleigh on Saturday 12th March 2022. Most of the bee equipment providers will be there with many discounts on offer. Tickets are £6 and can be bought online at <https://beetradex.co.uk>.

BBKA Spring Convention 2022. The 2022 Spring Convention will be held from 8-10 April at Harper Adams University, Shropshire TF10 8NB. This event can be expected to include a full programme of talks by leading beekeepers, some excellent workshops and trade stands. See <https://www.bbka.org.uk/Pages/Category/about-spring-convention> for further details.

Christmas

Beekeeping Books. If you are looking for ideas for Christmas presents then a book could be the answer:

- For the beginner: Hamlyn's 'Bee Manual' by Adrian and Claire Waring.
- First year: 'Guide to Bees and Honey' by Ted Hooper MBE.
- Next steps: 'Honey Bee: inside & Out' and Honey Bee: Around & About' by Celia Davis.
- More detail: 'The Biology of the Honey Bee' by Mark L Winston.
- Any book by Professor Tom Seeley.

**A very Merry Christmas to all Wiltshire Beekeepers
 and a wish for a 
happy, healthy honey bees throughout the New**