

# SEVENOAKS AND TUNBRIDGE WELLS BEEKEEPERS BRANCH NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2021

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## Annual Meeting and Prize-Giving

Our AGM will take place in November. It is important to attend so that you can have a say in how the Branch is run. Prizes and certificates will also be presented to the winners from our honey show. The meeting is on Tuesday 16 November at 7.30pm at Weald Memorial Hall, Long Barn Road, Sevenoaks Weald, TN14 6PT.

## Bee Senses

Did you know that bees have five eyes and yet their vision is 100 times worse than ours? That was one of the many interesting facts we learned from our Vice-Chairman, John Hendrie in his talk 'Senses of the Honey Bee' at our October meeting. He explained that a lot of petals look dull to us but the bees can see lines that will guide them to the nectar.

If you have stood by your hives and seen bees that appear to be just flying in circles then you could have witnessed young bees learning to recognise landmarks. They come out of the hive and fly in loops facing their hive so that they will be able to find their way home.

John also had a very useful practical tip on robbing from outside your house when you are trying to extract honey. If you have brought a super up to the back door but it has dripped honey and attracted bees then the worst thing you can do is remove it completely. The bees will have communicated the location of the honey and more and more will arrive to try to find it. However, if you leave just one frame with a small amount of honey the bees will take the honey but, when the frame is empty, they will go away.  
*Mary Staffurth*



## Long Service Award

John Hendrie received his commendation for 40 years on the executive committee of the National Honey Show in October. He is now President of the National Honey Show. This photo was posted on Facebook by BBKA on the day that John received his chain of office.

## Training New Beekeepers

After 18 months we have finally got our training days back in action. It was wonderful to be able to see beekeepers in person and to welcome new members to the Branch. As before, the purpose of the course is to make sure prospective new beekeepers have sufficient information to decide if they are ready to get started. We discuss the commitment required to keep bees, as well as the logistics of where to put your hive, and do a quick run through the options available for the equipment you will really need. We also outline beekeepers activities throughout the year, reflecting the natural lifecycle of the colony.

However, the most important point is getting to know and work with other local beekeepers so you can continue to develop your skill and experience, as well as knowing where to get advice or a helping hand when you need one.

We hope to run a further course later in the year.

*Liz Birchenough, Membership Secretary and Treasurer*

## Space for hives

We have been contacted by Jenny, who lives near Otford station. She would like to offer some space for a hive or two in her garden. If you think this would suit you, please contact Jenny on [jenny.cooper4@btinternet.com](mailto:jenny.cooper4@btinternet.com)

## **Beekeeping in November**

Your bees should by now be into the start of their quiescent stage with the winter bees emerging from pupation. As we have had warm weather, the bees have been out foraging for every last drop of nectar.

I have been gapping up my roadside hedge with hazel and hawthorn, the salt lorries kill off much of the previous year's plantings so I have planted larger shrubs this time. The jays, along with the mice and squirrels, are burying seeds all over the place. We have twelve walnut trees in different places and sweet chestnuts from one to three years old. I will replant these on our southern boundary although they will not fruit in my lifetime.

The Branch AGM is not far off, I hope as many beekeepers as possible will attend. I would like the meeting to discuss the education of new members.

As always we will be voting for committee members and officers. The committee is responsible for the general running of the Branch and the Chairman keeps order and has a casting vote.

The President has a position to maintain the probity of the Branch in relation to the Articles of Association and the Byelaws of KBKA as well as the Charity status.

*Peter Hutton, Branch President*

## **Beekeeping Exam Study Group**

Kent, Dover, Medway and Thanet Beekeepers are jointly offering a free to attend Zoom study group for members who wish to expand their knowledge of beekeeping for the BBKA "Module 1 – Honey Bee Management", possibly working towards the exam if wished. Study with others will be beneficial and enhance your chances of a credit if you decide to take the exam. KBKA, Dover & Thanet refund exam fees on successful completion.

The study group will run from 2nd November to 31st January on Tuesday evenings, from 19:00 to 21:00, followed by exam technique and revision sessions as needed. The exam date is 19th March 2022. Should you wish to take the exam, there is a £30 fee to pay.

Individual weeks will be led by two experienced beekeepers who will facilitate the 2 hour session between them, covering input on the criteria, followed by relevant exam questions from past papers.

If you'd like to register to attend the Zoom sessions, please do so by [clicking here](#). Once you're registered, Zoom will send you the link you'll need to join the meeting by e-mail automatically.

*Steve Clarkson* [membership@kbka.org.uk](mailto:membership@kbka.org.uk)

*Go to our website for all the latest beekeeping news: <http://www.sevenoaksbeekeepers.org.uk/>*

*Send pictures or items for the newsletter to [marystaffurth@yahoo.com](mailto:marystaffurth@yahoo.com)*