

**SEVENOAKS AND TUNBRIDGE WELLS
BEEKEEPERS
BRANCH NEWSLETTER**

JANUARY 2023

Editor: Mary Staffurth

Tel: 01732 462931 / Email: marystaffurth@yahoo.com

Branch website: <http://www.sevenoaksbeekeepers.org.uk/>



Happy New Year!

Get Ready for the 2023 Season

The first branch meeting of the season is called All About Hives. Anyone who has tried assembling flat-packed hives will know that it is not as straightforward as the instructions suggest. A team, including Branch Chairman, Cliff Hayward, will demonstrate the procedure to ensure your boxes are square and flat. There will also be tips on when to ignore the instructions. Different hive types will be examined in order to highlight their benefits and/or drawbacks. More experienced members are very welcome to attend to help put together frames for the Barrwood and Hilbert Road Apiaries. The meeting will be on **Tuesday 17 January at 7.30pm** at Weald Memorial Hall, Sevenoaks Weald.

New to Beekeeping?

The next Introduction to Beekeeping training course will take place on **Sunday 22 January** from 10am to 4pm at Weald Memorial Hall, Sevenoaks Weald. The aim is to ensure that potential new beekeepers are aware of the responsibilities and commitment required of beekeepers before getting started. We look forward to welcoming the participants as new members at our apiaries and meetings as they develop their practical skills before embarking on setting up their own apiaries.

Contact Liz Birchenough for more details: membership@sevenoaksbeekeepers.org.uk

All the Fun of the Fair



On Saturday 3 December, St John's Church in Hildenborough formally switched on the Christmas lights, accompanied with carols played by a local brass band to entertain the residents. The Christmas Fair was set up in the adjacent hall, selling a range of locally produced crafts. Our branch was represented by Sue Knights, Martin Barrett and myself to sell some of our honey. Lots of people were impressed that the honey came from an apiary within walking distance of the hall – you can't get much more local than that! Sue managed to win over several people who professed to not be huge fans of honey by explaining that our product had a much better flavour than commercially produced options.

We also made a number of useful contacts, which hopefully will result in some future events where we can talk about beekeeping and the importance of providing a good environment for all pollinators.

Liz Birchenough

Clean Comb, Varroa and Swarms

There will be plenty of indoor talks, practical events and apiary meetings throughout 2023. Here is a taster of what's coming up in the next few months:

February

Bob Smith: Keep it Clean

Bob will talk about the different comb change methods. He will explain the reasons for regular comb change, the benefits and timings of each method and to how to balance this with swarm control and honey production. **Tuesday 28 February** at 7.30pm at Weald Memorial Hall, Sevenoaks Weald

March

Steve Riley: How to Recognise Varroa Resistance in your Colonies

Colonies that display hygienic behaviour against varroa are being managed chemical free. Many of us would like to be able to control varroa without chemicals but how can we recognise such hygienic behaviour? Steve Riley will explain. **Tuesday 21 March** at 7.30pm at Weald Memorial Hall, Sevenoaks Weald.

April

Preparing for the Swarming Season

One of the most difficult aspects of beekeeping is preventing your colonies from swarming, especially as most books say that you must first find the queen. At this meeting methods of swarm control that do not require you finding the queen will be explained. **Tuesday 18 April** at 7.30pm at Weald Memorial Hall, Sevenoaks Weald.

Branch Honey For Sale

Branch honey is still available at £7.50 for a 1lb jar, and £6 for a 12oz jar. If you are buying this for family or friends, please remember the honey is not pasteurised, and therefore not suitable for infants under 12 months or expectant mothers. Available from Liz at membership@sevenoaksbeekeepers.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