



# The Hive

TTVBKA Newsletter

March 2026

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## Update from the Chair

Dear Member,

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2026. I wish you all a great start to the new beekeeping year with whatever challenges that brings for us all. I happened to check my hives in early March and they had all made it through the winter and there was lots of brood and copious nectar and pollen coming in. One hive also had a few drone cells already so maybe it will be an early swarming season. I like to think the bees know more about what is to come than we do.

The next main event for the TTVBKA is the AGM on March 27th and the committee and I look forward to seeing as many of you there as possible. You will be very welcome and the main item to consider is the transition to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and you will be asked to vote on this. Please read through the document pack which will arrive by email on March 13th.

# Shop news

Our Equipment Centre is a not-for-profit 'shop' for members of the T&TVBKA. The shop is open every Friday from 6pm until 8.30pm throughout the season.

The shop has a good selection of hives parts, frames and foundation for common hive designs and our prices are usually lower than other beekeeping suppliers and online sources.

**The shop will open on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March**

You will have been asked to fill in a questionnaire so we can understand you and your requirements better and you will also find in the document pack the list of talks and events that we have organised for this year. Please make a plan to come along to whatever interests you and we anticipate the mead making lecture will be in demand.

The apiary has undergone many physical changes in the last year to make it run more efficiently and we are about to start our teaching programme for new beekeepers and our wonderfully successful schools' education programme. It will be a fantastic year.

I and the committee wish you all a successful beekeeping year and look forward to seeing you on March 27th.

Best regards,  
Greg

## Spring begins:

### The first inspection of the year

Your first inspection of the year depends on both the weather and your purpose for opening the hive. Choose a warm, calm day of around 12 °C or higher; a good rule of thumb is that if you're comfortable walking around in shirt sleeves, it's warm enough to open a colony. Keep the inspection brief and focus on the essentials: checking food reserves, ensuring the colony has enough space, assessing brood pattern and queen performance, and looking for early signs of disease or swarming.

Continue to heft colonies throughout winter and early spring and add fondant if a hive feels light.

#### Before inspection:

- Make sure your suit is bee-proof!
  - Check your veil for rips & damage
- Get all equipment ready:
  - Smoker & tools
  - Queen excluder
  - Ekes
  - Feeder
  - Super/brood
  - Hive records



## When to Do Your First Inspection

For a full inspection, aim for a day of around 12 °C, while a quick, initial check can be done between 10 °C and 12 °C. It's important not to inspect too early in the season: warm spells in February or early March often give way to sudden cold snaps, and if the queen is accidentally damaged at this stage the colony may be unable to requeen.

At the same time, there is a balance to strike, as in our area swarming typically begins in the second or third week of April, so colonies need to be assessed and managed before that point.

## Before Opening the Hive

Decide on the purpose of your inspection before lifting the roof, as having a clear plan keeps the visit short and reduces heat loss.

Before opening the hive, take a minute or two to watch the entrance. You're looking for:

- normal foraging traffic,
- pollen coming in (suggests brood rearing),
- no robbing behaviour or unusual agitation,
- no blocked entrance or dead bee build up.

If a varroa board is already in place, check it for brood cappings, pollen and other debris, and note the position and density of wax cappings to gauge the size and location of the cluster inside the hive.

## What to Check/Do During the First Inspection

Checking stores early in the season is essential, as colonies can still starve if spring arrives late. If food levels are low, offer a thin syrup, and remove any remaining fondant once natural forage becomes reliably available.

As you move through the brood area, look for evidence of a well laying queen:

- Eggs,
- Consistent brood pattern,
- Brood in all stages (BIAS).

If you cannot see eggs, avoid assuming the colony is queenless; placing a test frame from another colony is a safer way to confirm whether they are able to raise a queen.





## Space & Supering

Assessing colony size and brood levels helps you judge whether the bees have enough space to continue expanding. When a colony becomes crowded, adding supers or moving to a double-brood setup for stronger colonies prevents congestion and reduces the risk of triggering swarm preparations.

## Queens, Queen Cells & Swarming

This is the ideal time to mark queens, colonies are still relatively small, and queens are easier to spot. During inspections in March and early April, it's rare to find queen cells, but from mid-April onward you should check carefully at every inspection.

Understanding the difference between a simple queen cup and a charged queen cell is essential, as the latter signals that the colony may be preparing to swarm. Having a clear swarm-control method planned and the necessary equipment ready in advance ensures you can act promptly when signs of swarm preparation appear.

## Pests & Disease

Regular checks for pests and disease are essential throughout the season.

Monitoring Varroa levels should be a routine part of every inspection as rising counts can quickly undermine colony health. Check for signs of other pests or disease such as Chalkbrood mummies, Deformed Wings Virus (DWV), Foulbrood signs or any brood irregularities that may indicate a brood disorder.

Make inspections efficient to protect brood from unnecessary chilling.

## Hive Hardware Condition

Check over the hive hardware/woodwork. Look for damp or damaged frames, any signs of mould, and boxes that have warped or no longer fit snugly. Make sure roofs, crown boards, and floors are sound and weatherproof. Plan how you will repair or replace faulty or damaged equipment.

## Weak and Failed Colonies

Weak colonies can be downsized to a nuc to see if they recover. If healthy consider uniting with another colony.

If a colony has died (failed), close the entrance straight away to prevent robbing until you can inspect it properly. Try to understand why it may have failed, common causes can include:

- Poor/failed queens
- Varroa-related issues
- Starvation
- Small/weak colonies

## After the Inspection

Record what you saw, not just what you did, this builds a reliable picture of colony development

## Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Opening too early in the year or in poor weather
- Long, meandering inspections without a clear goal
- Adding supers too late, causing congestion and swarming
- Assuming a colony is queen-less without using a test frame

# Around the Apiary

## Other jobs for March

March is a time of increasing activity within the hive but can be unpredictable when it come to the weather. Starvation can still be a threat. Keep hefting your hives and if needed feed with fondant placing it directly on the frames above the bees. If the weather is warmer and bees are actively flying, feed a 1:1 syrup.

- Remove mouse, woodpecker guards and other guards
- Monitor varroa drop
- Check your equipment is ready for the season to start; spare hive parts, foundation, frames, etc. contact our Equipment Centre/Shop to order your equipment
- Keep alert for signs of the Yellow Legged Asian Hornet, join the association WhatsApp group TTVBKA-AHT for updates
- Get your record sheets ready and review last years!



# Staying safe in the apiary:

## Protective clothing, a key part of safe beekeeping

Recent reports of beekeepers experiencing fatal anaphylactic reactions offer a sober reminder that no one, however experienced, is completely protected from the risks associated with stings. Although such incidents are rare, they emphasise the importance of wearing appropriate protective clothing.

A well-fitted suit or jacket, secure veil, and appropriate gloves form the first line of defence against unexpected colony behaviour. Even calm colonies can become defensive due to weather changes, nectar dearth, queenlessness, or threat from predators.

Here is a straightforward guide to what you should wear when beekeeping.

### Full Suit or Jacket

- A full suit offers the most protection, especially for beginners or when working lively colonies
- A jacket is fine for quick inspections or calmer bees
- Light colours (white or pale shades) are best, bees dislike dark, fuzzy fabrics because they resemble predators
- Suits, jackets and trousers shouldn't be too tight. You'll also need room to bend and stretch, so avoid protective clothing that restricts your movement

### Veil

- **Absolutely non-negotiable** - it is crucial to protect your face especially around the eyes, nose, and ears
- Choose a fencing style or round veil that keeps mesh away from your face
- Choose a veil that provides good visibility and ventilation
- Make sure it seals securely to your suit or jacket

### Footwear

- Sturdy boots that **cover your ankles**
- Long Wellington boots with a wide calf to tuck your suit/trousers in are ideal
- Always tuck your trouser legs into your socks or boots to prevent curious bees wandering upward
- Ankle protectors or 'gaiters' are available and fit over boots

## Better Bees start here

### Why good records make great colonies

**Keeping hive records is more than a formality. They help track colony health, spot problems early, and support good management throughout the season.**

**Health and disease management** - Keeping notes on brood, queen, and food stores helps detect issues early. Recording Varroa treatments ensures responsible use. Clear records assist inspections if diseases appear.

**Note:** You must keep records of all veterinary medicines administered to colonies for at least five years, irrespective if the colony concerned is no longer in your possession or has died during that period. Failing to keep records of **veterinary medicines applied to honey bee colonies**, as set out in the Veterinary Medicines Regulations (VMR) 2013, is an offence.

## Gloves

- Marigold style, thick rubber gloves are preferred by most beekeepers
- Nitrile or thin beekeeping gloves offer better feel and fewer squashed bees
- Leather gloves offer the highest level of protection but can reduce dexterity, harbour diseases and are difficult to clean. It is recommended to cover the leather gloves/gauntlets with plastic/rubber gloves
- Whatever you choose, ensure they overlap with your sleeves
- Gauntlets, long, extended cuffs designed to reach past the wrist and up the forearm, provide an added layer of protection. They designed to seal the gap between the glove and the bee suit to prevent bees from crawling inside
- Don't forget to **remove any rings**, they can become dangerously tight if stung and your finger swells. In a worst-case scenario, it can cut off circulation and require cutting off the ring

## Underlayers

- Wear light, breathable clothing underneath
- Avoid wool or fleece, bees can get tangled in fibres
- On hot days, moisture wicking sportswear is ideal

## Optional but helpful!

- A baseball cap under your veil to keep mesh off your face
- Hair tied back/up
- A sweatband or headband, useful on hotter days to prevent sweat from rolling off onto your glasses or eyes!
- No strong perfumes, scented lotions, or hair products, they can agitate bees

## Quick safety principles

- Ensure all gaps are sealed: wrists, ankles, neckline, zips
- Move calmly and deliberately
- Keep your suit clean, propolis and alarm pheromone build up can make bees defensive
- Regularly check your suit and veil for tears and gaps

No bee suit is 100% sting-proof but by wearing the right protective clothing, and wearing it correctly, remains one of the simplest and most effective ways to stay safe.

## Queen and colony care -

Tracking queen age, behaviour, and productivity guides requeening and swarm prevention. Patterns over time identify stronger queens for potential queenrearing.

## Seasonal planning -

Records show when colonies build up, use stores, and need supers. This helps plan equipment orders and honey harvests.

## Learning and confidence

- For new beekeepers, records support learning and advice. Experienced keepers use them to refine techniques and manage multiple colonies.

## What to record -

Include date, weather, temperament, queen status, brood, stores, pests, Varroa counts, equipment changes and other actions.



There is a useful [Hive Record template](#) on the website that can be downloaded

# Time to renew your membership!

An email was recently sent out to all members with full details on how to renew their subscriptions.

It is important to renew your membership to keep all your benefits in place. This includes your BBKA membership (including third party and product liability cover through BBKA) and use of the TTVBKA facilities.

Registered (full) membership includes disease loss insurance cover with BDI Ltd for up to three hives. BDI premiums that are paid **before 31 March** will take effect immediately. Any paid after 31 March will not enjoy cover until **40 days** following payment to the local BKA. You can add hives for a supplementary premium. It is therefore sensible to pay on time and allow for any expected increase in the numbers of colonies they may have during the season, due to swarm control, collecting swarms or queen rearing.

**At the 2025 AGM it was agreed that we pass on increases in BBKA Capitation and increase the TTVBKA membership from £25 to £27 for 2026.** Full details, benefits & prices of our Membership options can be found [here](#).

If you have not received an email or have any questions with regarding your membership, please email [membership@twickerbees.co.uk](mailto:membership@twickerbees.co.uk).

**Thanks to all members for the continuing support over the past 12 months.**

## Yellow-legged (Asian) hornet update

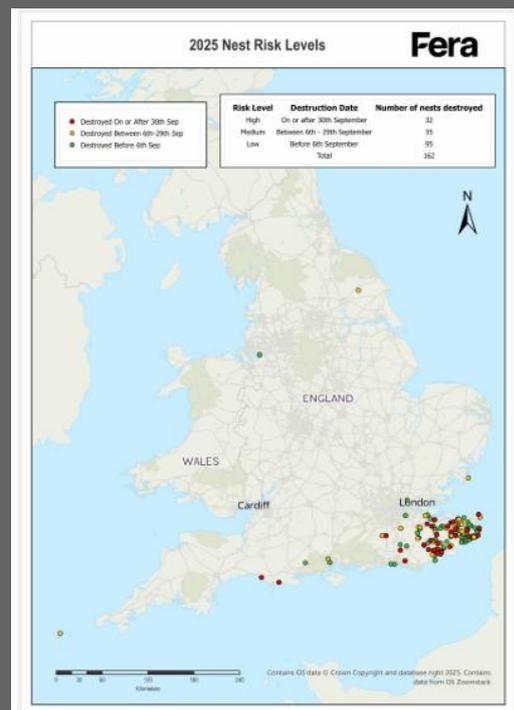
This time of year can start to see the emergence of Yellow-legged Asian hornet queens from hibernation. After a **record number of sightings in 2025** we need everyone to remain vigilant for new nests. Spring vigilance and early destruction of small nests can help protect pollinators.

**DEFRA** and the Fera Science Ltd have identified areas where there may be a higher risk of overwintering Yellow-legged Asian Hornets in England based on previous nest finds. In 2025, a total of 32 late nests were destroyed in England and these areas are considered to be of higher risk.

A map highlighting the YLH nests found and destroyed in 2025 is shown here. The nests have been coloured according to their calculated risk level. There are 32 high risk nests (red), 35 medium risk nests (amber) and 95 low risk nests (green).

DEFRA will not be carrying out any spring queen trapping in 2026, but they have released this information so any beekeepers willing to do so can organise some trapping.

**DEFRA are asking anyone who traps a YLH spring queen to take steps to kill or prevent release and report it via the Asian Hornet Watch App or the online reporting form.**



[Click to enlarge](#)

# BBKA modules, exams & assessments

The 2026 Dates and Fees document has been published and is now available on the **BBKA Learning Online** for members to view.

The application closing dates for the **Junior, Basic and Honey Bee Health Assessments** have changed for 2026 and are now the 30th April.

The **Honey Bee Health Assessment** has been reduced in price to £25. The Exam Board strongly recommend that candidates hold the Honey Bee Health Certificate before the General Husbandry Assessment is attempted.

The **Advanced Husbandry Assessments** have been arranged to take place at Stoneleigh over four days in July, depending on numbers of applicants. The cost of the assessment has also increased but you will be refunded 50% of your entry fee if you successfully pass the assessment.

The **Microscopy Assessment** date is moving to the last weekend in September. Applications will close on 30th June.

## Module Exams

Written Module Exams take place on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March and Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> November

# BBKA updates & talks

## BBKA Spring Convention

17th -19th April 2026, Harper Adams University, Near Telford, Shropshire, TF10 8NB

The BBKA Spring Convention is one of Europe's largest national beekeeping events, attracting enthusiasts, professionals, and beginners alike. This annual gathering provides a platform to share knowledge, discuss the latest developments in apiculture, and foster community among beekeepers.

Bookings and ticket sales are now open, the full programme, FAQs and additional information is available at:

[www.bbka.org.uk/springconvention](http://www.bbka.org.uk/springconvention).



## BBKA Calls to align UK honey labelling with the EU Honey Directive 2024

The British Beekeepers' Association (BBKA) has written to the Rt Hon Emma Reynolds PC MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, urging the government to align domestic honey labelling regulations with the EU Honey Directive 2024. In addition, the BBKA has requested the formation of an All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for honey to champion the interests of beekeeping.

## BBKA Zoom Talks

**Yellow-Legged Asian Hornet** - Tue. 17th March 2026, 7pm

**'The Four Basics', Jamie Ellis** - 21st April

**Practical Swarm Collection, Gerry Stuart** - 19th May

**The Hive in July, Jack Silberrad** - 16th June

**Artificial Sterols, Jan Bogaert, ApixBiosciences** - 21st July

**Yellow-Legged Asian Hornet, Dr Peter Kennedy** - 18th August

**Adam Leitch** - 17th November

**Food Safety Legislation and How It Applies to the Beekeeper, Andy Pedley** - 15th December

Further information will be available nearer the time for each talk. The BBKA reserves the right to change or cancel talks as may prove necessary. Zoom link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81233819992?pwd=DYMZxTImJjpRCLJjYjvblxgybQQdSZ.1> Meeting ID: 812 3381 9992 Passcode: 527929

# Hive-fives!! Celebrating success

## John Hendrie Bee Health Award

Twickenham and Thames Valley Beekeepers' Association received the BBKA John Hendrie Bee Health Award for 2025 for the Area Association with the highest percentage of its membership with Honey Bee Health Assessment passes during the year.

This award celebrates not only the achievements of our members, but also the commitment and hard work of the Education team. Special recognition goes to Ray Nicol for his excellent module study groups. Well done to everyone involved!

## Hive minds

### Members celebrate exam success

Congratulations to all members who successfully completed their BBKA assessments or module exams last year. These achievements reflect real dedication, many hours of study, practical skill, and a commitment to high standards in beekeeping. Certificates were presented to the worthy recipients during President's Evening, and we're proud to recognise their hard work and celebrate their success.

**Jack Howell** Basic Assessment

**Maggie King** Basic Assessment

**Eija Lehtovaara** Basic Assessment

**Neil Sagar** Basic Assessment

**James Slade** Basic Assessment

**Luxi Xu** Basic Assessment

**Christine Betley** Honey Bee Health Assessment

**Neil Cooley** Honey Bee Health Assessment

**Sally L Ewen** Honey Bee Health Assessment

**Karen Mann** Honey Bee Health Assessment

**Philip Webb** Microscopy Assessment

**Sally L Ewen** Honey Bee Diseases, Pests and Poisoning, Module 3



# Dates for the diary

We are pleased to present our programme of talks, workshops, and events for members. The outline below highlights the TTVBKA activities planned for the first half of the year. Additional sessions will be announced as the programme develops, so please look out for further updates.



## Woodwork Workshop – Ray Nicol

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March, 10am – 2pm

Ray and the Apiary team will be running a woodwork shop for those that are new to or not too confident in building frames, brood boxes, supers, stands etc. **This workshop will also be of use to those that are taking the Basic Assessment this year as making a frame is a key element of the assessment.**

## My Experience as a Beekeeper - Stephen Taylor

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> April, 8pm – 9pm

TTVBKA member Stephen Taylor will be sharing insights from his own beekeeping journey and the lessons he's learned along the way.

## Nosema & Acarine Clinic – Sally Ewen

Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April, 11am – 3pm

Sally and the microscopy team will be running a Nosema and Acarine clinic. This is open to the membership to bring along a sample of thirty of your bees (from each colony) and check them for these pests and diseases and where you will be coached you how to carry out these investigations yourselves.

## Swarms! – Ray Nicol

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May, 8pm – 9pm

Ray will give a short talk on swarms.

## TTVBKA Library System – Patrick Brennan

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May, 8pm – 9pm

Patrick will provide an overview on the new library system including how to create an account, search for publication and reserve a book.





## Honey Preparation Room Workshop – Patrick Brennan

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May, 11am – 12.30pm

Patrick will provide a demonstration on how to use the Honey Preparation Room (HPR) including the motorised extractors and other equipment safely and hygienically.

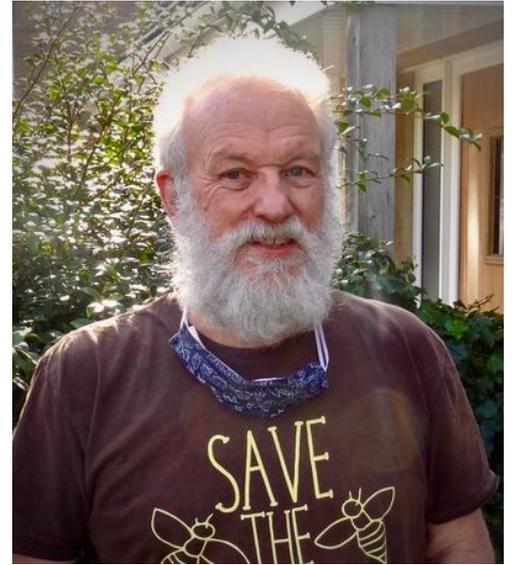
## Food Safety for Beekeepers - Andy Pedley

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May, 8pm – 10pm

Andy will deal with the practical side of food safety as it applies to beekeepers, from the hive right through harvest and sale. He'll deal with compound foods and allergens.

Andy has been keeping bees for 30 years, and as an EHO developed an interest in the law on food safety as it applies to beekeepers and honey production about 14 years ago. In 2009, he authored a series in BeeCraft on the Food Safety Legislation and has authored other relevant articles on the Honey Regulations and Recycling jars. He's recently worked more on the nuts and bolts of food safety for beekeepers, and how Food Safety law applies to beekeepers

Andy is currently the Training Apiary Manager for Oxfordshire BKA which gives him responsibility for 10 colonies there as well as his own 7 in various apiaries around Oxfordshire.



## Queen Rearing – Ray Nicol

Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May, 8pm – 9pm

Aimed at the beekeeper who has only a few hives and so doesn't have the resources to build and maintain a large, queenless hive for any length of time. The focus will be on using queenright methods that do not interrupt the bee's natural cycle of honey processing and so maintain the honey crop. In particular, we'll look at the Ben Harden/NBU methods alongside the Miller frame and grafting. The outcome of the talk will be to equip the beekeeper with enough information to try queen rearing for themselves.

## TTVBKA Annual Open Day

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June, 1pm – 4pm

Join us at our annual event, where we promote our work to the local community, sell some of our honey, have some fun and raise some important funds for the association.

## Making Mead – Warwick Francis & Rue Turner

Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June, 8pm – 9pm

TTVBKA members Warwick and Rue will talk about the art of mead making, a tradition that dates back thousands of years. They will discuss the different types of mead, basic fermentation and production, bottling and storage methods and share tips and tricks that they have picked up over the years.



## Bee Health Day – TTVBKA and the National Bee Unit (NBU)

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> July, Times TBC - The Exchange, Twickenham

This is a special event organised in partnership with the NBU, focusing on how to ensure your bees are healthy, how to prevent and detect any diseases, and what to do in case a problem is found.

This is a fantastic opportunity to learn from experienced bee inspectors the telltale signs to look for in your hive(s) for the various types of disease that can afflict a colony. The day will consist of a mix of lectures and practical sessions.

This event will be by ticket only, further details to follow.

## The National Honey Show & BBKA Spring Convention – Ray Nicol & Patrick Brennan

Friday 21<sup>st</sup> August, 8pm – 9pm

Ray and Pat will outline the benefits of visiting the BBKA Spring Convention and The National Honey Show, from the wide range of lectures and workshops to the chance to meet other beekeepers, share ideas, and pick up fresh inspiration for your own beekeeping.

## Microscopy – Sally Ewen

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September, Times TBC

Details to follow



## Honey Sensory Analysis - Helen Rogers, The Honey Guild

Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 7.30pm – 9.30pm

Helen is a honey sommelier and co-founder of The Honey Guild of the United Kingdom. She was trained by the Italian Experts in the Sensory Analysis of Honey in Bologna. She runs honey-tasting workshops to highlight the importance of bees and demonstrate the array of delicious kinds of honey available. She owns Highgate Honey, a beekeeping company based in North London, she co-authored "80 Flowers for Bees" which is a manual for picking the best plants to benefit different types of bees.

She is a judge for the Great Taste Awards and The London International Honey Awards. She is also a director of BeeCraft.

Helen's talk will be a dive into the world of honey sensory analysis. She will cover the main techniques and why it can benefit beekeepers and consumers. She will bring along a selection of UK mono-floral honeys and there will be an opportunity to sample them.

Website: [highgatehoney.com](http://highgatehoney.com) + [honeyguild.co.uk](http://honeyguild.co.uk)

Socials: [@highgatehoney](https://www.instagram.com/highgatehoney) + [@honeyguilduk](https://www.instagram.com/honeyguilduk)

## TTVBKA Annual Honey Show

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> October, 1pm – 4pm

The association's annual Honey Show it is a great opportunity to see a range of different honeys, bee-related products and winning vegetables. Open to members and non-members, there is a wide range of categories, including open classes for children and local schools too. The day culminates in an auction where people can bid to buy some of the best entries that members kindly donate to raise money for the club.



Thinking of entering this year's show? For guidance, tips, and practical advice on judging criteria, preparing, and presenting honey, wax, and other hive products at a Honey Show visit the [TTVBKA website](http://TTVBKA website)



## President's Evening

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> November, 7.30pm – 11pm

Details to follow

*All events at the Twickenham Apiary unless otherwise stated*

## What's in flower in March

Early spring forage is building quickly despite the cold, wet start to March. Snowdrops are fading, but crocuses, [winter aconite](#), [Anemone blanda](#), squill and [Muscari](#) are all providing valuable early pollen. In gardens, hellebores, Pulmonaria and wallflowers, especially [Erysimum 'Bowles Mauve'](#), are attracting plenty of bees.

[Hazel catkins](#) are at their peak, with willow and white poplar just beginning to open. Small willows such as [Salix caprea 'Kilmarnock'](#) offer especially rich, high-protein pollen for honey bees, bumblebees and early solitary species. Flowering shrubs including flowering currant, [Sarcococca](#), blackthorn, quince and [single-flowered camellias](#) are also contributing well.

Wildflowers such as [lesser celandine](#), primrose, ground ivy, [white deadnettle](#) and the first [Spanish bluebells](#) are emerging, with white deadnettle proving particularly valuable for bumblebees.



# Bee a volunteer

Just like honey bees we need an army of workers to carry out roles & tasks, with the combined efforts making us a strong and robust colony (organisation).

As a charity, our Association is run entirely by volunteers, and without the support of these volunteers the important education, facilities and services we offer to beekeepers, young people and the public would not be possible.

Volunteering can be hugely satisfying and is not only a chance to pass on your skills & experience but also the opportunity to develop your own.

We are keen to expand on our current team of volunteers and there are many ways that you can get involved. And you don't need to be a beekeeper, we are grateful for any time, skill or experience you can offer.

Areas where you can help include Apiary teaching, Schools & Groups, Gardening Club, General DIY & handyman, Trade shop, Website & IT and Events but we are happy for any support you can give.

Get in touch with us at [volunteer@twickerbees.co.uk](mailto:volunteer@twickerbees.co.uk) if you would like to find out more.

# Bee-coming a CIO

## Latest news

Last year, the Association began the process of becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and developing a new Constitution. The Committee is pleased to confirm that the proposed Constitution for the new CIO is now complete and ready to be presented to the membership for approval.



At the upcoming AGM on 27th March, members will be asked to vote on whether to proceed with the application to register the CIO using the proposed Constitution. Members will also be invited to elect the trustees who will serve on the new CIO's Committee.

Following a successful vote by members at the AGM, the new Constitution will be submitted to the Charity Commission as part of the application to register the CIO. If the Charity Commission is satisfied that the Constitution meets its requirements, the CIO will be formally registered as a new charity.

The existing charity will continue to operate as normal during this period. Once the CIO has been registered, members of the current TTVBKA charity will then be asked at an AGM or SGM to vote on dissolving or merging the existing charity and transferring its assets to the new CIO.

It can take up to six months for the Charity Commission to review and approve the registration, assuming no significant changes are required. Once approval is granted, there will be a transition period to complete the necessary administrative steps, including the transfer of bank accounts, assets, and other operational arrangements.

You can find the proposed [Constitution and Key Points for Members here](#).

If you would like to find out more about the project or have any questions, please email [CIOProject@twickerbees.co.uk](mailto:CIOProject@twickerbees.co.uk).

# Combing through the news

## A round up of Bee related news & research

### [How an annual 'wedding flight' of 1,000 virgin queens is ensuring the revival of Europe's dark bee](#)

The Belgian ceremony attracts beekeepers from the Netherlands, France and Germany keen to boost dark bee numbers and stop the spread of the hybrid honeybee

### [Climate change is altering plant and pollinator relationships](#)

An international team of scientists recently published a literature review that compiles the research from 340 scientific articles on how climate change is disrupting plant reproduction.

### [UBC research reveals why honey bees overthrow their queen](#)

New research shows how viral infections disrupt colony stability — and a key pheromone that could help maintain cohesive, productive hives.

### [He hears the bees: The blind beekeeper who defied the odds in Nagaland](#)

When a swarm of bees settled near his home in Leankonger village nearly five years ago, Tsangmong could not see them. He heard them.

### [AI helping farmer with data about bees and crops](#)

Mapping where bees collect pollen, planting, weeding and understanding the soil are all at the forefront of artificial intelligence (AI) being used by a farmer in Cornwall.

### [Flowers shape the spread of viruses among wild bees, new study finds](#)

A new study shows that viruses in wild bees are closely linked to the flowers they visit and the availability of floral resources across the landscape.

### [How adult hygienic honey bees show unique advantages in fighting infectious pathogens](#)

For the first time, research shows that a key social trait in honey bees is linked to measurable physiological advantages that can improve colony survival.

### [Small brains, big compute: Scientists want to build GPS chips that work like a honeybee's brain](#)

How bees are driving next-gen, low power chip research.

### [Beekeeper died from sting while not wearing hat](#)

An amateur beekeeper died of anaphylactic shock after a sting when he was not wearing a protective hat, according to a coroner.

### [Scientists find alarming effect of forever chemicals in honeybees](#)

Forever chemicals may affect bees' royal jelly used to feed larvae, scientists say.

### [Student wins award with beekeeping film](#)

A young film-maker has won an award for a short documentary about beekeeping.

### ["A beehive is as natural as a pasture of grazing sheep." Why beekeeping is causing a huge problem for wild bees - according to scientists](#)

It's an amazing experience to put on a bee suit and see a hive," says Andrew Whitehouse, head of operations for the invertebrate conservation group, Buglife. "There's suddenly thousands and thousands of bees flying around you. But you know," he adds, "beekeeping doesn't give you a connection to nature."

### **Maps created by 1960s schoolchildren provide new insights into habitat losses**

A new study of 1960s maps, many of which were created by young people, has provided important fresh evidence of the timing and extent of habitat losses caused by agricultural intensification and urban growth in England and Wales.

### **Circular Economics: Honey Bee Pest Turns Excess Pollen Into Food**

The small hive beetle (*Aethina tumida*) is a pest of honey bees, but it can also be deployed in beneficial ways.

### **AI Is Fast-Tracking Climate Research, From Weather Forecasts to Sardines**

Artificial intelligence is providing a significant boost to climate research projects, including a partnership between the University of Aberdeen and the Bumblebee Conservation Trust to identify bumblebee species and the plants that attract them.

### **National Geographic has announced the next instalment of the Emmy-winning “Secrets of” franchise, Secrets of the Bees**

Hosted and narrated by BAFTA and Emmy-winning National Geographic Explorer Bertie Gregory, Secrets of the Bees uses groundbreaking filming technology to reveal the extraordinary world of bees.

### **Red flowers have a ‘magic trait’ to attract birds and keep bees away**

For flowering plants, reproduction is a question of the birds and the bees. Attracting the right pollinator can be a matter of survival...

### **Neonicotinoid insecticides cause deadly overheating behavior in honey bees study finds**

A study of ecotoxicity risk from neonicotinoid insecticides, published in Environmental Chemistry and Ecotoxicology, finds that chemicals in this class of pesticides, particularly dinotefuron, increase the body temperature of *Apis mellifera* (European honey bee) and subsequently accelerate the translocation (movement) of contaminants into hives by the honey bees.

## Any other buzzness...

### **Membership Survey**

In February you would have received an invitation to complete our Membership Survey. The Committee would like to know more about you so we can communicate effectively and directly with you, ask what you would like from the Association in the future, what we do well and what we could do better.

Please spend a few minutes to respond to the questionnaire, All fully completed responses will be entered in a random prize draw (you are able to opt-out), to receive a £25 voucher for either Squires Garden Centre or Amazon. Thanks for your support, all comments and ideas are appreciated.

### **TTVBKA Membership Survey**

## And finally...

We would love to include more content from our members. If you would like to discuss an idea, drop us a line at [newsletter@twickerbees.co.uk](mailto:newsletter@twickerbees.co.uk). We'd also like to hear your feedback on the newsletter including any topics you would like to see included. And don't forget to follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)!