

Wisborough Green Beekeepers Association

Newsletter – April 2019

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Contributions for the May newsletter should be received by Friday 26 April.

From the Editor

Despite a few cold mornings, it's beginning to feel as if Spring is here. Roger has been very busy giving his *Sustainability* talks up and down the country, and he also reports back on a successful *Introduction to Beekeeping* day, and some exciting developments at the Apiary.

If anyone has a couple of hours a week to help keep an eye on some bees please see the message from Anne Dennig.

It would be good to get a few more contributions to the newsletter, so if you observed some bee behaviour, have attended a talk, read a book or tried out a recipe, please send in a brief report to share it with other members. Please do take note of the deadline of the last Friday of the month, however.

Tamsin



Image by [Beverly Buckley](#) from [Pixabay](#)

Dates for your diary

Bee Market and Auction

The West Sussex Beekeepers' Association is again organising a Bee Market and Auction for the benefit of its members and non-members, with beekeepers attending to buy and sell from a very wide area. The event will again take place at Chichester College's Brinsbury Campus in Pulborough, West Sussex on **Saturday 27th April 2019**. Auction details, Guidance Notes and the Entry Form are available to download from the WSBKA website - www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk/auction.html . The Auction catalogue will be published online after 22nd April.

For further details contact Graham on email secretary@westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk or phone 01403 752493 Mobile 07761 349281.

We will need **helpers** on the day at the auction, so please offer assistance. Debbie Lawrence deellorry@hotmail.co.uk is co-ordinating this. Please contact her directly.

Patterson in Print

I presented a "Sustainability" day in Exeter on 23 March, where during question time I was asked **when is the earliest in the year you can inspect a hive**. It was a rather daft question because it depends on the location, temperature, etc. I said that in general you are O.K. if the bees are flying, but if you suspect they are getting short of food, then inspect whatever the weather. Someone rather strongly said that we shouldn't open a colony unless the temperature is above 14°C and certainly not in March. I wondered how often they inspected their bees in some summers. The lady who organised the event locally sent me an email to tell me she took my advice and on the following day found three colonies with sealed queen cells. Perhaps there is a message there, or maybe several.

The "**Sustainability**" days went exceptionally well, with over 1,350 attendees at 9 locations, all filling the venues bar two and both of them were well attended. I expected resistance from those who import bees and queens or sell them, but there wasn't a hint. Feedback was good, showing that we put on what beekeepers wanted. As has been my experience for some time there are many longish term beekeepers who weren't very knowledgeable, still believing some of the twaddle that is peddled in some books and online. You would think their own experience and observations would help them to learn.

The local event at Rudgwick was hosted by Wisborough Green BKA and I thank those who helped with car parking, setting out the hall, booking in and making tea/coffee.

Although organised fairly late I felt the **Honey and Wax Workshops** went well. Most of the presentations were done by Daisy and myself. These were interactive with much discussion and some good hints and tips from attendees. There was a suggestion this can be repeated every couple of years or so to help the newer beekeepers.

Roger

"Introduction to Beekeeping" Day

We changed the title of this annual event to better reflect what the course provided. This is the same as the "Beginners Day" where many of our WGBKA members started beekeeping. In recent years there has been a decline in participants as other BKAs now have their own courses, but this year there were about 50, which is the most we have had for several years.

There were several new organisers this year. John Glover did the publicity and took bookings. He helped on the day, so met those he had been in contact with. Daisy shared the presenting with me and despite only briefly looking at the programme she did very well. A great achievement considering she had only just moved house. Maggie Turner organised printing of the booklets and the catering with help from Lisa Park, Lisa Baker and Tess Clarke. Murray West booked attendees in and Richard Gibby prepared honey for sale. Everyone did well and I thank them for their efforts. It was noticed and appreciated by attendees and I quote from an email from one of them *"Just wanted to say what a well organised and enjoyable day Saturday was with great food to boot!! A lovely group of people, worked well as a team. Please pass on my thanks."*

Some lived closer to other BKAs than us, so as usual we indicated where they are. Judging from comments I think we should get several of them attend our Preliminary sessions at the apiary. They were a very good group and a pleasure to teach.

Roger

The Apiary and Learning

Those who attended the AGM will know that we are very close to having a **new main apiary**, only a mile as the crow flies away from Dounhurst. It is intended to retain Dounhurst as an isolation apiary.

It is difficult to plan meetings at the moment, so please check emails regularly.

The area is woodland that needs clearing. Much of the felling has been done using chainsaws, so for safety reasons only a small party has been involved. We welcome help from those who can finish the job. There is wood that needs cutting up with chainsaws, the resulting logs being available to those who help with the clearing and moving bees.

If you have a chainsaw and are willing to help or can help with general clearing up please email me. Help will also be needed to move the bees, so if you have a trailer or pick-up then please also email me.

I will try to spread the work around as much as I can, so everyone has a chance to help.

Roger

Help wanted please

Help needed for approximately 2 hours a week in West Burton, to assist an experienced beekeeper to look after my hives whilst I am working in Uganda, for about 6 weeks from the 15th April.

Contact annedennig@icloud.com for details.

Nell in Print

Dad is involved with other clubs and societies and often gets emails that may apply to several. He has recently had an email from an organisation that alerts clubs and charities to items that companies no longer want, so are willing to donate them. Dad, being rather nosey, checked a few items out. There were some concrete blocks listed, so Dad thought they might be useful to stand bee hives on if they were reasonably close. There were 2 of them - in Edinburgh!

I have been to every "Sustainability" day with Dad. In doing so we have travelled just over 2,500 miles. I'm not sure he should be driving so far at his age. He might get upset if I have a word with him, so could someone volunteer to do it please?

I have met lots of really nice people, but some of them laugh at me when I bark. I don't know why they do that, perhaps I do it in the wrong place.

Nell

Rosie in Print

When Dad and some members were clearing the wood for the new apiary I did something very naughty. I was told to lay down with Nell, which I did for a long time until I got frightened by the noise of chainsaws. I ran away and ended up on the road where a kind couple stopped and rescued me. I got told off.

Rosie