



Warwick and Leamington Branch of Warwickshire Beekeepers

Membership Renewal for 2017

It's that time of year again for Members to renew their membership of Warwick and Leamington Beekeepers for 2017. In the case of all classes of member except Associates, this will automatically cover your renewal with Warwickshire Beekeepers' Association and the British Beekeepers' Association.

Having completed a renewal form, which you will find on our website after December 1st, please ensure you pay your subscription, rates being: Full Members inclusive of insurance for up to 3 colonies* - £45.00, Partner Members - £20.30, Junior Members £16.00, Associate Members - £5.00. £13.00 should be added to the subscription of Full, Junior and Associate Members if newsletters are required by Royal Mail as opposed to Email

* Full Members should add £2.00 additional insurance for up to 5 colonies, £5.25 for up to 10 colonies, £7.75 for up to 15 colonies, £9.50 for up to 20 colonies and £11.10 for up to 25 colonies - all inclusive of the first 3.

For a full explanation of the subscription structure, please go to <http://www.warleambees.org.uk/wlbk-subscription-rates/>

BACS payments should be made to A/C No 00173056, sort code 30-94-93, A/C Name Warwick & Leamington Spa Branch of WBKA, a registered charity. Cheques should be made out to W & L Beekeepers and sent to Mrs Val Dillon, Oak Tree Cottage, Cryfield Grange Road, Kenilworth, CV8 2JU Subscriptions are due by 31 December 2016.

It is of note that the Branch, County, BBKA and Bee Diseases Insurance rates are unchanged for 2017.

Notice of Annual General Meeting

The Branch AGM will take place from 7.30pm on Thursday 16 February 2017 at BBKA, Stoneleigh. If any member wishes to make any proposals at the AGM they are requested to notify the Acting Branch Secretary by 15 December 2016 (e-mail; secretary@warleambees.org.uk or 07836668439).

Nominations for Election to the Branch Executive Committee

Members are also invited to put their names forward to the Acting Branch Secretary for election to the Executive Committee at the 2017 AGM. The Executive Committee normally meets 6 times a year at Stoneleigh in the evening. The purpose of the Executive Committee is to determine general policy, plan and implement our range of activities and services and to monitor and control income and expenditure. The Executive Committee will have some vacancies in 2017, which we regard as a positive situation in that it ensures traditional ideas are questioned and new ideas are considered.

Influencing the branch's progress is rewarding and as a member of the committee you will learn more about how the Branch, County Association and the BBKA function. Members of the Committee take on responsibility for some aspects of the branch's activity. If you would like your name put forward, or to learn more about the role please contact the:

Acting Branch Secretary Chris Cox by e-mail; secretary@warleambees.org.uk or 07836668439

AGM Reminder

Thursday 16th February 2017 7.30pm at BBKA Stoneleigh

March meeting

16th March 7.30 p.m. BBKA

Making our own Asian Hornet Traps and Frames/waxing thereof.

The March Beetalk will let you know what size of plastic bottle to bring and other things, bring all your own materials and tools for the jobs. This will be done with plenty of chat, work and cake.....ENJOY

A short talk on the Asian Hornet i.e. what to look out for will hopefully be arranged.

...and The Top Award Goes To.....?

Heartiest congratulations are due to David Blower, whom many of you will remember as a rather keen WLBK Beekeeper, who, not only has become a Master Beekeeper, but has been awarded The Wax Chandlers Award for the best Master Beekeeper of his year.

This award has been made every year since 1965 to the Master Beekeeper in the year who has scored the highest marks in the BBKA module examinations. David has been invited to the Chandlers' Court Lunch to receive the award from the Lord Mayor of London.



The Worshipful Company of Wax Chandlers is an ancient livery company in the City of London. In 1371 it gained control over the trade of Wax Chandlers in the City and in 1484 it was granted a Royal Charter by King Richard III. It originated as a "fraternity" or an association of craftsmen which was formed for mutual benefit and spiritual support. It became increasingly important in the 14th and 15th centuries as religious ceremonies became more elaborate and churches were lit by candles throughout the day and night. The Wax Chandlers have supported the BBKA and the National Honey Show financially and in other ways over many years.

The Court Lunch is a formal occasion in honour of the Lord Mayor of London, currently Dr. Andrew Charles Parmley.

Now members of Shipston Branch, David and wife, Margery retain their links with WLBK as Associate members and through the many friends they made whilst in the area.

DHL Apiary Bombshell

Just as things were really coming together at our Branch Apiary at Dalehouse Lane.

Plans for the redevelopment of the adjacent A46 exit were announced..... And Yes! It will have a significant impact on this hard won and much valued facility!!!!

So what effect will the works have and what are we doing about it?

The proposals involve building a new roundabout outside our existing entrance and realigning Dalehouse Lane which, when finished, will see a loss of about one third of our site. In itself this is not a "show stopper" but, of course, more land will be required for working space and with the disruption during the construction works we will have to vacate the site, at least temporarily, for a couple of years. Indications at this stage are that the site of the portakabin and the training apiary field will be left unscathed by the road works but the community apiary, the field shelter, composting loo and the community apiary shed may need to be moved or abandoned.

With work due to commence in March 2018, we need to find alternative sites to move to by the end of the 2017 season. We have, of course, made the Highways team aware of our predicament and they are taking our relocation requirements into account. We are awaiting a response.

For the occupants of the community apiary, we, for our part are actively seeking alternative out apiary sites in the Kenilworth area but we also need to find a suitable site for the training apiary. Whilst we are actively exploring one or two ideas for this, we would take this opportunity to ask to all our members who may be aware of any potentially suitable sites to contact us with details

In the longer term, whilst a new access will be provided to the land left over at DHL after completion, there is, at this stage, a question mark over whether we can eventually return there as there may be a change of ownership of the land. We are in contact with both the current owner and the County Council's land management team and encouragingly they have been sympathetic to our plight but these are early days.

So this development is something of a disappointment and we could have done without the uncertainty that it causes, but rest assured we are on the case and so far, with the goodwill of the parties involved, we are reasonably optimistic that we will be able to secure an acceptable outcome to enable training to continue.

I will keep you updated as and when things happen

Mick Smith

A Place to Keep Bees

The University Hospital, Walsgrave is willing to make an extensive undisturbed naturally planted area available for an apiary. I have surveyed the site which is eminently suitable for a number of beekeepers to use as a community apiary in the same way the ones we have at Warwick University and our teaching apiary at Dalehouse Lane are used.

I have offered the opportunity to Coventry beekeepers with no interest shown. However I am aware quite a few of our members work at the hospital, or for others who would find it a practical location, and I therefore thought this may be of interest to Warwick and Leamington beekeepers.

The community apiary at Warwick University has proved popular with users able to pop out at lunchtime or after work to care for their bees and this new site is an opportunity to do the same. Access will always be available

If you are interested would you in the first instance send an email to michaelatownsend@hotmail.com giving me an idea of the number of hives you might want to have in the apiary.

Mike Townsend

Hints and Tips

Many thanks to Liz Bates for the following gems this month

Cleaning polynucs

Polynucs are great until you start cleaning them. I've been through a succession of rather vicious chemicals, with some success, but taking a huge amount of time. Having read a piece about steam cleaning on a beekeeping blog, I tried using a steam wallpaper stripper without the flat plate on the end ; we'd bought it to make a wax melter for old frames <http://www.screwfix.com/p/energer-enb484stm-2000w-wallpaper-stripper-240v/87160> .

If you do this, the propolis and wax softens in seconds and 'pulls' off, using a hive tool. Where I had not damaged the polystyrene with other methods, it came off completely clean leaving an undamaged surface. The steam does not melt the polystyrene as you can hold it as near to the surface as required. I cleaned out about six nucs thoroughly in an hour. Obviously, if there is a risk of any nasty bugs, it is then necessary to sterilise it as advised on NBU <http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/downloadDocument.cfm?id=1069>

As a disclaimer – we have Paynes nucs, and this method, using the kit described above, works excellently. I do not know whether other polystyrene or other wallpaper strippers would be as good.....but if you find cleaning them as time-consuming as I do, it is well worth testing!

If you have any hints or tips that you would like to share, please send them to h.essex@virgin.net...
Thank you Helen Essex

Honey Shows 2017

Dates for your Diary

Branch Honey Show **14th September**

County Honey Show **30th September**

National Honey Show **26th October**

These shows provide a great opportunity to find out more about perfecting the preparation of honey and other hive product. They give an invaluable chance to have the quality of your honey judged and so give you confidence to go ahead and sell your produce.

Our Branch Show has been brought forward this year, to enable us to enter the County Show on the strength of our results from the Branch Show.

Then onwards and upwards to the Nationals!

Both the Branch and County Shows will be held at BBKA Stoneleigh this year.

Helen Essex (Honey Show Secretary)

Editor Roger Wilkes, email address is roger.wilkes@kenilworthhoney.co.uk or hard copy can be posted to him at:

12 Mercia Avenue, Kenilworth CV8 1EU. **Content to him for next month by February 27th latest.**

Please send in plain text, unformatted, using Microsoft Word or another common program.

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