



February 2016 Newsletter

Letter from the Chair

As we start to move into March the weather has been a very much in and out with a considerable amount of rain in mid February, this damp weather is not acceptable to the Honeybee and often many colonies are lost so it is time to take stock. My bees are looking reasonable and I need to start early spring preparations such as, do they have enough food stores and if not feed with Fondant, also ensure the entrances are clear and remove any dead bees that have not made it through the winter. A check is also needed to ensure that the colonies are not suffering from Nosema after a long time cooped up in the hive and treat accordingly. The inspections at this time of the year should not take more 5 minutes as the weather is still cold.

At the January meeting Ron Hoskins gave us a wonderful insight into his work on the Varroa free honeybee, the audience was captivated with the lecture and the wonderful photography that was displayed. Thank you Ron for a most enjoyable and entertaining evening.

Kathy and I attended the County Committee meeting this week, one of the items on the agenda was the Swindon Branch being informed that they owed the County £640 for underpaid Capitation fees in 2015. We disputed the figures and made it very clear that Swindon did not owe any monies. Following an in depth debate it was found proven that Swindon had kept its books in good order and the problem had been between the WBKA and BBKA who had not updated the Swindon membership correctly. Also at the meeting with Paul Vickery having to resign his position as the County Vice Chairman due to family problems Mr Richard Oliver (Kennet) was elected to replace him.

The February meeting is an open forum so please make every effort to attend. I am sure you have many beekeeping issues that you would like to discuss and now is the time to air your problems.

The training programme has now been arranged for 2016, The Swindon Apiary will be managed by experienced members, Each taking monthly turns, they will be assisted by other club members including the new would be beekeepers wishing to gain experience in handling bees and gaining confidence and to also learn some good housekeeping skills. I will talk about the Swindon Apiary at the next meeting.

Anyone who wishes to be involved in catching Swarms this year should please contact Stephen Greenaway who will add you to his list of volunteers.

Finally may I wish everyone will have favourable start to the beekeeping year.

Mike Benson

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

There are still a few people who have not yet renewed their membership. Please let me know if you will be renewing by Friday 26.2.16. The BBKA will be informed of any lapsed. Memberships.

Insurance certificates have now been issued. If you have not received this or if there are any errors please let Kathy Hobson know asap.



NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting is an Open Forum. These meetings are always well attended as it gives members the opportunity to swap ideas and get help with any problems. We are unable to hold the meeting at our normal venue but have been able to book the Conservatory at the Jovial Monk at St Andrews Ridge, North Swindon. I show below the address. If you don't use a satnav and need directions please give Kathy Hobson a ring, 07923 473261.

**Jovial Monk Highdown Way, St Andrews Ridge, Swindon SN25 4YD
01793 728636**

SWARM COLLECTION

If any members want to go and are able to collect swarms, to please send an e-mail to stephen@beenucs.co.uk with your Mobile Tel Number and Area you will be able to cover.

If a swarm is reported close to you an e-mail and call will go out to you with its location and contact details from the person who contacted Stephen.

TO SEE A SWARM COLLECTED

If any New Beekeepers want to see a swarm being collected, send you details to stephen@greenawaymarine.com

With your Mobile Number and contact details, also the area you can travel to. You will be contacted when a swarm is being collected with address details.

CLUB APIARY/TRAINING

The meeting held a few weeks ago to discuss the apiary and the 2016 was attended by approximate 15 members – full and associate. Just to confirm what Mike has said in his letter some experienced members have agreed to giving the Apiary are giving four weekly sessions of their time to look after the club's bees. They will be helped by one other member. It is hoped that new or associate members intending to keep bees also attend these sessions to gain experience and knowledge.

A Starting Beekeeping Course and 4 Taster Days will run this year. Stephen Greenaway will be running the Basic Assessment course. If you wish to take part in any of the courses please let Kathy Hobson know. (To take part in the basic course you need to have kept bees for a year).

Full details of dates etc will be issued shortly and will be shown on the website. We still need more volunteers to go on the "reserve" list.

DIARY DATES

25 FEBUARY 2016

Open forum – see new venue details

31 MARCH 2016

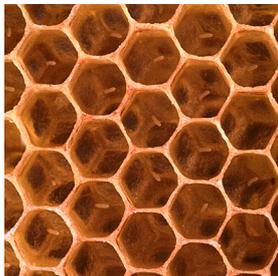
Swarm Control - Stephen Greenaway

28 APRIL

Robert Carpenter Turner - Seasonal Bee Inspector

We are currently planning the rest of the 2016 meetings. If you have any suggestions please let Kathy Hobson know.

*Nicola Perrett holds a small stock of fleeces,
polo shirts and sweat shirts
If you would like to purchase one please contact her
nicola.perrett@btinternet.com*



**Meetings are held on the last Thursday of the month
throughout the year (except December)
Meetings start at 7.30pm
Please support the bar as we are not charged for using venues**