



NEWSLETTER – April 2023

COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2022/2023

Tim Bullock	- Chairman
Stephen Greenaway	- Vice Chairman, Spray and Swarm Liaison.
Clive Harris	- Treasurer
Kathy Hobson	- Secretary, Membership Secretary
Justin Downes	- Newsletter Editor
Nicola Perrett	
Mike Benson	
Mick Carter	
Website Manager	-Christopher Wilkinson

APIARY NOTES - Tim Bullock

As we go into May hopefully the weather will stay warm as we come into our 'peak season' for beekeeping... Now is the time that colonies are more likely to swarm, Are you ready? Once a colony has entered swarm preparation mode, nothing is likely to stop them so just knocking back queen cells will only stop swarming for another week – the more you do it the sneakier they will get about where they build the queen cells, so eventually you'll miss one. The key thing for us is what's their reasons for building queen cells – are they superseding the current queen, have they already lost her or are they just trying to expand the colony number?

Splitting a colony that is in swarm mode is usually the best solution. We either end up with 2 good colonies so can expand our number, or there are two colonies that could be united once one of the queens has been destroyed (usually the older one, but it might be that the new one fails for some reason).

As supers start to fill add more, if bees have space, they are less likely to swarm. Once honey is capped off then supers can be removed and extracted. If you don't expect to have much oilseed rape honey, then there's nothing to stop you from just adding more supers and do a 'mass' extraction later in the spring. If you do have lots of oilseed rape honey, then it's best to extract as soon as supers are capped so hopefully it hasn't granulated...

When inspecting it's worth having a plan, what am I looking for, what do I want to achieve by inspecting. The key ones are the queen there and laying? Are they running out of space? Is the laying pattern a normal shape? Is there any sign of disease? Etc.

Don't forget to keep colony records up to date, including now recording and reporting the presence of varroa.

SDBKA Website

Please be aware that club website is currently undergoing a refresh. It has not been updated since 2014 and software is becoming obsolete. We would like to give it a new feel and one option is using photographs. If you have any interesting or unusual photographs you will be willing to share and have placed on the website. Any images should be your own and royalty free. They can be sent directly to our website manager Chris Wilkinson - christopherwilkinson7@gmail.com

TWIGS Open Day

The first open day of the year is next Sunday 23rd April 11am until 4pm. Can any of you spare some time to come and talk to members of the public about beekeeping? Any time you can give will be appreciated. Of course, you will also be able to sell your honey. Please email Nicola Perrett if you can help asap (or for more details) - nicola.perrett@btinternet.com

Unusual Honeybee Fact

In 1791, during the French Revolution, the government demanded a record of all beehives. Honey was used as a source of tax revenue. Many beekeepers who did not wish to pay more tax, destroyed their hives.

Club Meetings

Up and coming meetings:

27th April 23 – Use of Wax – Nicola Perrett

25th May 23 – Seasonal Beekeeper – Avril Earl

29th June 23 – TBC

Meetings are held on the last Thursday of each month in the Skittle Alley at the Haydon Wick Club, Blunsdon Road, Swindon SN25 1JD, start time 7.30pm. Please come along, all are welcome.

Other Dates of Note:

Great Somerford Bee Auction - Monday 1st May 2023 - The Showground, Great Somerford, Chippenham, SN15 5JA

Viewing from 11:30am, auction commencing at 1pm. Full details can be found on the facebook page or call 07767 838317/07841 291449

Forthcoming National Events

BBKA Spring Convention – Friday 21st to Sunday 23rd April 2023 - Harper Adams University, Shropshire, TF10 8NB

Site link:

[Spring Convention | British Beekeepers Association \(bbka.org.uk\)](https://www.bbka.org.uk)

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

If you feel you would like share anything of note or which may be of benefit to other members, then please let me know.

Justin

justin.downes@yahoo.co.uk

