



NEWSLETTER – December 2024



WISHING YOU ALL A HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

STEERING GROUP MEMBERS 2024/2025

Tim Bullock

Stephen Greenaway

Kevin Holt

Nicola Perrett

Mick Carter

Clive Harris

Marcel Marsh

Barry Roberts

Justin Downes

Kathy Hobson

Matt O'Dell

APIARY NOTES - Tim Bullock (Chair)

Like last year the biggest issue weather wise seems to be wind, having had storm Bert 3 weeks ago and another one last weekend. Both brought gusts of 50 mph+ and 3 inches of rain in 12 hours. If you haven't done so already it's certainly worth checking to see if any of your colonies have been hit by debris, been knocked/blown over by the winds or been affected by floods. Colonies can survive being opened up like that for short periods of time in winter but can't survive for long if it comes wet and/or cold.

My many interests, as far as colonies are concerned, now will be varroa and stores. Stores are easy to assess- hefting hives will give a good indication of what's in a hive. Putting in the monitoring boards for a couple of days will also tell you how many frames the bees are on and how much feed they are taking as the cappings will be on the board. If you have any concerns then I'd recommend putting some fondant on hives, either straight onto the top of frames or above the crown board over one of the holes.

Checking varroa levels is a bit trickier but not that difficult. Again, with the monitoring boards in you can quickly count the mite drop, wipe the boards clean and re-insert. If mite numbers appear to be high then I'd strongly recommend treating colonies with oxalic acid. I prefer to trickle treat which involves opening up the hives. This will cause heat loss and possibly stress out colonies so I'll try and do it at the end of a cold period rather than during one. This will also mean that there will be less capped brood present if there was some at the start of the cold weather. Now is also a good time to go through records for the year – what went well and what plans do you want for next year. Don't forget to add in varroa treatments into your records as well.

I hope you all have merry and relaxing Christmas and a habee new year!!

SOCIAL MEDIA

Don't forget to check out our Facebook and Instagram pages. If you have any bee related photos to share please email them to Kathy.



STANTON PRESENTION

Thanks to Auris, Mo and Kate for talking to us last meeting to us about the work they are doing to carry on Ron Hoskins Legacy. They were unable to show their presentation at the meeting so it is attached for you all to see.

TRAINING

An email was sent out a few weeks ago regarding training and to let you know that Barry Roberts has agreed to act as the Club's Training Co-Ordinator. Details of who to contact in respect of the Basic Assessment were included in the email. Please contact Barry if you have any queries regarding Modules

SDBKA APIARIES – Park Farm and TWIGS

The colonies are being fed fondant and the normal winter checks are being carried out

TWINKLY TWIGS

Mick Carter braved the weather and flew solo and attended this last open day for the year at TWIGS. Thanks Mick for flying the SDBKA "flag".

CLUB MEETINGS

No meetings December and January

Next meeting dates

27.2.25

27.3.25

We are moving to a new venue!!! From February the Club meetings (the last Thursday if the month) will take place at The Tawny Owl Pub, Taw Hill, Swindon SN25 1WR. Meetings will start at 7.30pm

MEMBERS INPUT

If you have any articles or a meeting topic idea that you think may be of interest to members please let Kathy Hobson know.

