



August 2021

Hello Members,

Hopefully everyone has had or about to have reasonable honey harvests in spite of what can only be described politely as extremely irritating weather this summer! For those still to harvest - a reminder that the club extractors are available to hire for £10.00/week and jars are available to purchase from the clubhouse too. Honey that the club has harvested from our apiary is also available to buy should you wish at Jeskyns cafe, Jeskyns Park or the cafe at Shorne Country Park.

Congratulations are in order for Kerry, Kevin and Nathan who were successful in taking their basic beekeeping examinations this year. Well done one and all! New members may wish to try after a full year of beekeeping, please contact Lesley or Michelle for more details on how to go about this.

Apiary Inspection 8th August:

All members can participate in apiary inspections and more should! It's a fantastic way to share knowledge and enjoy socialising with other members and like-minded people. We managed to get some great pics of the apiary inspection on the 8th of August where Michelle and Gary our brilliant apiary management team were demonstrating different methods for clearing supers for some of the newer recruits. Some pictures below:



Left to right: Michelle, Gary, Adam, Neil and Gary.





Member Profile:



Each month we aim to profile a different club member with a small question and answer section, this month we're talking to Michelle, our club Apiary Manager. If you'd like to be featured please let Lesley or Neil know. Hopefully it will be a nice way for newer members to put names to faces and get a little bit of background on our membership. Next Month (fingers crossed!) we will be visiting and chatting to Roy, our Vice Chairman about commercial beekeeping.

Q: How many years have you been a beekeeper and what brought you to beekeeping?

A: *13 years. A childhood visit to an apiary with the Duke of Edinburgh scheme.*

Q: How many hives do you run besides the club apiary?

A: *5 hives*

Q: Whats the biggest challenge you've had as a beekeeper?

A: *Dealing with a rogue hive and having to cull it. I did not enter beekeeping to kill a colony but it's important to remove the bees for public safety and for the genetic pool.*

Q: One piece of advice for somebody thinking of starting beekeeping or having just started?

A: *Take a course on beekeeping before getting a hive and become a member of your local branch for mentoring, further training and support.*

Q: Whats a dreamy piece of kit you wish you owned?

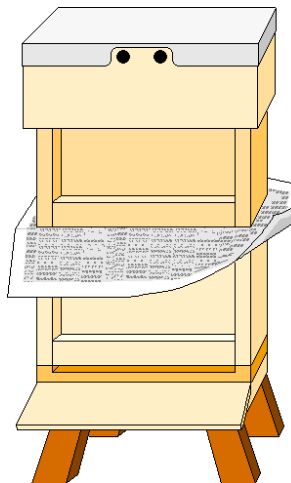
A: *A purpose built extraction room.*

Q: Final technical one. How do the different plants visit influence the flavour of the honey our bees produce?

A: *Honey has a terroir or "taste of place". The plants available in the area and the season will influence the flavour, colour and texture due to each plant having different pollen along with its sugar content in the nectar. Most hobby keepers do not move their hives to a single type of forage, so it tends to be multi floral. Honey from each hive with an apiary can be completely different due to plants the bees have chosen to visit.*

Uniting colonies:

Our 'how to' guide this month also comes from Michelle and is a useful guide to uniting colonies and the reasons for doing this. If you spot an article you think members would enjoy or you would like to contribute to the 'how to' section of the club's newsletter then please get in touch with Lesley or Neil.



Some of the reasons for uniting.

- United colony will have a better survival rate than the separate colonies.
- Combining smaller colonies into one colony
- Uniting a queen-right colony to one that is queenless
- Making up for a shortage of queens at the end of the season, where there may have been failed mating flights.
- Dealing with a colony of laying workers
- Reducing the number of colonies taken into the winter
- Creating a strong foraging force for a particular flow.
- Combining mating nuclei at end of season.

The Paper method.

- Firstly, check the health of both colonies and the quality of their queens.
- Decide which is the inferior queen, (age, laying pattern or swarming tendency).
- Reduce colonies to one brood box, remember the brood boxes need to have same dimensions.
- Find and remove the defective queen, (if weaker colony has one).
- At end of the day, when the flying bees are home, remove the roof and crown board of the queen-right colony.
- Cover the brood box with newspaper.
- Place a queen excluder on top of the newspaper. Pierce the paper, carefully, with small holes, without tearing it. The idea is the bees come into contact slowly as they enlarge the holes.
- Gently smoke the entrance of the queen-less colony to drive bees on the floor up the frames.
- Remove brood box from the floor carefully and place over the queen excluder and newspaper. The queen substance will be transferred from the queen- right brood box to the box without a queen as the bees chew the newspaper. By the time the holes are big enough for the workers to get through they should unite without fighting. You will find small pieces of paper outside the entrance and on the ground under the open mesh floor.
- The colony should not be inspected for a week.
- Once successfully united you can rearrange all the brood into one brood box along with a few frames of stores, remove remaining newspaper and redundant top brood box.

Dates for the diary, notes and reminders:

- Club members are invited to the branch social afternoon and BBQ by kind invitation of Charlotte and Phil on Sunday the 12th of September at 2pm, details to follow.
- Remember - as we are coming into the time of year we'll all be treating for varroa, you must by law keep a record of the treatments you have used, more information can be found here: <https://www.bbka.org.uk/news/veterinary-medicines-warning> and here: <https://www.nationalbeeunit.com/index.cfm?sectionid=110>
- Those with some extra time on their hands as the season winds down, while you're not cleaning your equipment or making frames, I can recommend the following youtube channels for useful information, techniques and 'how tos':

The Norfolk Honey Company:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpXjo1sDWxAR0_PpF4Y1ymA

Black Mountain Honey:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCaa4pgaAzz8DCjiYJrx9cMA>