



# THE FEDERATION OF BERKSHIRE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATIONS

The Federation, its Council, and its Officers cannot be held responsible for the views expressed in the Newsletter or possible errors.

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## Editors Corner



Despite the sunny start to October, this month heralds the beginning of Autumn. Although the ivy is in full bloom, the foraging days are getting shorter and the nights are cooler. Varroa treatment finished and supers removed, it is time for bees to be settling down for the winter. Having lost one of my hives last winter to isolation starvation caused by too much ivy honey in the hive, I have been feeding my bees syrup to encourage them to take this down for winter stores. It is interesting how one hive eagerly devours the

easy feed, whilst another more or less ignores it – preferring, it seems to bring in their own stores from the ivy flow! I hope I will be able to use the large stocks of sugar I purchased for this purpose before the nights get too cold and it will be time to switch to Ambrosia or similar. The hefting is getting heavier to hopefully all will be well!

Our associations will be busy with AGMs this month and the winter meetings with a range of interesting speakers will begin. It seems there is a running theme on queen rearing with two interesting articles reporting personal experiences with this skill.

If any of you are looking for out apiary sites, we have a list of people offering land. Locations and contact details can be found towards the end of the newsletter.

*Sue Remenyi*

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## Federation News

### BBKA survey on the BBKA in the coming years - for all BBKA members

As you will read below, input is invited from individual registered, partner and country members of the BBKA, as well as from each of our four branches and from the Federation. The link will take you to the members area of the BBKA so you will need your BBKA membership number in order to sign in. We do have them if you can't find it! I have reproduced the letter from Doug Brown from the BBKA requesting your participation.

This has been sent to the Federation chairman and secretary as well as all four local associations (branches) chairmen and secretaries.

Caroline Bushell

### *BBKA in the coming years*

Over the last twelve years the BBKA has grown significantly. In 2003 there were 60 Area Associations and 8,463 members. Today there are 69 Area Associations and around 25,500 members. Twelve years ago members were mostly interested in producing honey but British bee-keeping has changed much over the last 12 years. Today's membership's interests are wide and varied.

Like many organisations that have grown rapidly, our structure and ways of working need to adapt. So the time has come to ask ourselves some questions starting with the following:

1. What roles should the BBKA be playing?
2. What sort of organisation structure would be best to fulfil these roles?
3. What sort of constitutional structure would ensure good governance?

### *The Survey*

A survey has been developed to get input which will allow us to start the process of answering those questions. The Survey is being sent electronically to all Area Association Members and their Branches and/or Divisions. I am also asking all members as individuals to complete the survey to get as wide a response as possible. Three months has been allowed for consultation and discussion locally. The survey will be open from the beginning of October to the end of December. To help in the analysis of the data it should be completed online via the link available at [http://www.bbka.org.uk/members/bbka\\_survey\\_october\\_to\\_december\\_2015](http://www.bbka.org.uk/members/bbka_survey_october_to_december_2015)

As well as involving your members in preparing the collective response of your association I would urge you to encourage them to also complete the survey online as an individual by going to

[http://www.bbka.org.uk/members/bbka\\_survey\\_october\\_to\\_december\\_2015](http://www.bbka.org.uk/members/bbka_survey_october_to_december_2015)

for the link to the survey.

Some of the questions posed in the survey are, of necessity, controversial but they have all been suggested to me by members and member association officers. This is an opportunity to see if they have a wider relevance.

### *The BBKA is your organisation.*

This survey is the first step in ensuring that it is the organisation you want it to be whatever your interest in the keeping of bees. Please help by supporting this survey and please be reassured that all responses will be treated in the strictest of confidence, with no one member or Association identified by their responses.

If you have any questions or problems completing the survey then please contact the office on [2015survey@BBKA.org.uk](mailto:2015survey@BBKA.org.uk).

If you do not feel able to answer any question there is, in most cases, a Don't Know option. There are also opportunities to add comments for all questions where appropriate.

I look forward to seeing the results of this survey, which I am sure will give us all a lot to think about. Thank you in advance for your support.

With Kind Regards

Doug Brown

BBKA Chairman

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## In My Apiary

### Notes on Building a Zest Hive.

Back in January the inventors of the Zest hive came along to SCBKA and gave an intriguing presentation on their product. If you have yet to come across the Zest hive, their website [www.thezesthive.com](http://www.thezesthive.com) explains what it involves and why they believe that it represents a substantial improvement over traditional hives.

The Zest hive is a DIY build and the purpose of this article is simply to set out my experiences in sourcing the required materials and constructing the hive up to the point where the bees were introduced, in the hope that this may assist others who are considering undertaking the same exercise.



The first task is to decide where you are going to build the hive, I mention this seemingly obvious point first because unlike most other hives, the Zest hive cannot be easily re-located once constructed, the body of the Zest hive, comprising the floor, walls and the top is constructed from thermal blocks, the floor then stands on two timber bearers which in turn stand on four heavy concrete blocks which rest on a 600 mm x 600 mm concrete paving slab. If you need to relocate the hive at any point it will mean deconstructing it block by block which clearly would be an involved matter with bees in residence.

Although I have been obliged to construct my own hive on a sloping site, I am sure it would be better to construct it on a level site wherever possible. If that is not an option then it

is important to level the site only by excavating material on the uphill side and not to try and build up the level on the downhill side. If you were to do this then the made up ground is unlikely to carry the weight and you may find that settlement takes place later on which could interfere with the integrity of the block work.

For those not used to handling materials of this kind, a word about weights. Whilst the thermal blocks weigh only about 7 kg each and therefore can be easily lifted and manoeuvred by most people, the four concrete blocks on which the hive rests are likely to weigh around 25 kg each, more so if wet and you may need to enlist some assistance to collect these and lift them into position. Last but not least is the concrete paving slab, a typical 'riven' slab used in domestic situations may weigh 35 kg or so and here again if you are not accustomed to handling these kinds of materials then do make sure that you get some assistance.



Once a level area of ground had been prepared for the slab I then compacted the soil with a an old fence post, you could of course use any other heavy object for this purpose but the more time you spend on this the less the chance of the ground subsiding unevenly under the weight of the hive. When I was satisfied with the compaction I then laid the slab on a bed of gravel some 20 mm thick and ensured that the slab was level in all directions as shown in the photo.

I then placed the four heavy concrete blocks on the slab, each one oversailing the slab by about 100 mm at each end and checked again that the top surface of each pair of blocks was level along its length and across both sets of blocks, as shown in the photo.

On top of the blocks I then laid two lengths of pvc damp proof membrane to protect the timber bearers from any damp which may rise up through the blocks, cutting the membrane about



100 mm longer than the bearers also acts as a vermin guard. I then laid the two timber bearers on top of the damp proof membrane and the six thermal blocks which make up the floor of the hive were then laid flat on the timber bearers as shown in the photo below.



Whilst the Zest guys say that their hive is 'functionally varroa free' I thought it might be useful to install a varroa floor in my build so that the presence of varroa can be checked for in exactly the same way as in traditional hives by using a sticky board. (I also had an old hardwood patio door frame lying around that seemed ideal for the purpose). In the photo below the mesh will rest on the 10mm 'lip' on the wood frame that extends up inside the block walls. The sticky boards slide in from the side through rebates routed from the underside of the frame. Whether the boards are in or out the rebates are always sealed with timber lats to ensure that no ventilation takes place.

I then built the walls two courses high, in my case off the wooden frame but for others it would be straight off the floor blocks, the blocks were laid dry, just like Lego only bigger! The plastic bearer frame (which together with the plastic brood/honey frames are the only parts supplied by Zest) should be laid on the base blocks first and a line drawn around the inside to give the exact position for the walls.



Once the walls were completed the bearer frame was installed on the top and the brood/honey frames hung from it as shown in the photo below.

I then laid the six blocks which form the top of the hive on top of the bearer frame, if you are wondering, the bees get in and out of the hive via a series of small notches on the top of the side and end rails of the bearer frame. Although not shown in the photo, I have since drilled 30 mm holes in the middle of a couple of the top blocks to facilitate feeding via rapid feeders which rest on the top.

The completed blockwork is shown in the photo below, in my build I have used two different sizes of blocks which explains the different appearance. To be clear the hive is intended to be constructed entirely from the longer blocks which can either be 600 mm long as in my case or 610 or 620 depending on the manufacturer. When using the longer blocks for the sidewalls you may wish to cut some end blocks to produce a 'neater' finished job although from the photos on the Zest website it appears that they prefer to leave on whatever projections there are on the ends. Cutting thermal blocks is in any event a very simple process, they can be cut with a wood saw. Although I have accounts at three different builder's merchants none could provide these blocks from stock and you're not likely to find them on the shelf in B & Q but they are available it may just require a degree of persistence.



As the thermal blocks are not intended for continual handling I have painted the blocks which form the top of the hive with an exterior masonry paint to try and afford some protection from the inevitable wear and tear.

Although the Zest design stipulates a typical roof covering of a corrugated iron sheet held down by bungees, I am told by my good lady that this is not an option in our garden and I am therefore proposing to reuse an old feather edge fencing panel as a roof, which may be somewhat more aesthetic although probably not a lot.

Finally a word about costs, the starter kit from Zest comprising the bearer frame and brood frames cost £75.00 plus £8.00 p & p, had I used the correct blocks for the whole hive (instead of rushing out and buying the wrong ones) then the 24 that are required for the hive would have cost £38.60. The four concrete blocks used for the base cost £5.70. The paving slab, gravel, timber bearers (50mm x 75mm x 1.2 m each), roof covering and damp proof membrane I already had but if you allow about £20.00 for these items then the total cost comes to somewhere in the region of £150.00.



As I mentioned earlier, this article just covers my experiences up to the point where the bees were introduced. At the time of writing I have had two colonies in the hive for several months and I hope to write a follow up report dealing with the operation of the hive later on.

Happy beekeeping,

*Bob Busby, South Chilterns*

## Ever tangled with *Dolichovespula Sylvestris*?



The tree wasp, not to be confused with the spectacular but non-stinging wood wasp or horntail, is a social wasp with a queen and colony like others of our common and well known adversaries. It is smaller, about two thirds the size, widespread but only locally common. According to my Collins Field Guide to Insects it builds nests in trees or in rotting wood stumps, is not aggressive but can and will sting if the nest is disturbed.

As beekeepers, it is not uncommon for us to be called about wasps and are occasionally gulled into attending problem nests. Such was my experience with a call from an elderly neighbour, stung three times while pruning his large ornamental grass feature. "They can't be wasps" he said, they're brown and too small" ... "the stings broke-off in my skin". I didn't really believe they were bees, but to help my fellow man I walked round just with my lightest Sherri's head and shoulders protection (The one I use when weeding in front of my garden hives) and an aerosol of 'Raid'. The grass clump was indeed at the base of an ornamental tree and numerous small insects were flying in and out beneath it. Fast direct flight and looking a kind khaki colour because of their speed and fast wing movements, none of the hovering we see with their larger relatives. After a few minutes I was able to discern the yellow and black colour and on tugging at their clump to look at the entrance quite a cloud flew-up. Stepping back a bit and handing my tin of Raid to the householder with a suggestion to use it at dusk we were suddenly attacked from behind in some force! We retreated hastily down to his garden side entrance, with me brushing wasps off his back. Luckily he was wearing a fairly thick fleece (although he told me afterwards he did get three more stings). They had no difficulty in stinging me through my denim trousers and what amazed me was their ability to get inside my clothing, walking home I got another sting under my arm, presumably from inside my Sherri's and on disrobing at home to apply the Piriton ointment, found four live ones in my cloths including one in my pocket. As I let them out the window I reflected that they'd have a tale to tell when they got home to the nest! Ten stings for me, four in the bathing suit area, one had the sting broken-off flush, quite a sting for a very small wasp, nearly 4mm!

I've included a photo but when in flight the colour doesn't look black and yellow and they don't seem to hover or settle much unless it's on you with aggressive intent! If you get involved with *D. Sylvestris* my advice is wear your thickest all enveloping bee suit.

*From a Reading Beekeeper.*



### John Belcher

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## South Chilterns Beekeepers Association

Saturday 26th September

A glorious late summer's afternoon at Greys Court. We were greeted by warm sunshine, the generous welcome of Colin Davies and the team and the promise of tea and cake for later. But we weren't there just to enjoy the end of season bonhomie, there were bees to be taken care of too.

In the apiary, Reg reminded us that at this time of year our focus should be on disease inspection and settling the bees down for winter.

As we inspected the three hives at Greys Court, Reg passed on his usual invaluable dose of bee-keeping wisdom.

Hands up who would have remembered not to smoke the front of the hive at this time of year as it can disturb the guard bees? Exactly. Instead a gentle puff of smoke between the boxes at the back of the hive is all that it needs.

And when we open up the hives, we're looking for normal brood, curled up larvae and nice smooth cappings. With a good stock of bees, then all should be well.

Reg gave us a few pointers concerning feeding as well.



First, to heft the hives to gauge the weight of stores as winter approaches. If feeding is needed, to do this in the evening so as not to encourage robbing. Reg also suggested that a bit of syrup at this time of year can encourage the queen to lay, even if stores are sufficient and that there's no reason not to feed even with Apiguard treatments in place. Finally, if you're concerned about ivy honey solidifying and being hard for the bees to use, you can score it open and spray with a mist of warm water to make life easier.

Looking further ahead to the end of October, that's the time to put mouse guards in place and secure against woodpeckers with a defensive wrap of chicken wire around the hive. Leaving only a treatment of oxalic acid in early January to be trickled down through the seams above the brood.

Leaving the Greys Court hives safe and sound, our healthy brood of beekeepers retired for tea and cake and a stroll around the grounds.

With thanks Reg and Colin and to all who baked and brewed, everyone went home a little wiser, a lot fuller and just about ready for winter.



Our first winter meeting is on Wednesday 21 October at 7.30pm in Woodcote Village Hall. This is our AGM and we will also enjoy a talk on "The (Bumble) Bees' Needs: ecology & conservation" by Dr Matt Heard.

*Tom Hudson*

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## Wokingham and District Beekeepers Association

As the days grow shorter and the mornings and evenings cooler, we beekeepers are turning our thoughts to how best we can overwinter our colonies and give thought to how we can improve our skills for the following year. One of our members John Waddelove, however, has been re-living his re-queening skills and wondering what he has learnt from his experience.

### ***Adventures of re-queening***

Having come to the conclusion that one of my hives was now queenless and no sign of any supercedure, the decision was made to purchase a replacement queen.

Her ladyship duly arrives with some 5 attendees through the post in an introduction cage. Not a foreign import I may add! A quick visual check that all seems well was carried out, a drop or two of water to help quench any thirsts, and cover up ready for the final journey to the off-site apiary after a short break of a couple of hours rest.

Off we go to the apiary - my assistant beekeeper (wife Felicity) and I, and introduction cage complete with entourage. The hive is opened up and after a little manipulation the cage is suspended between two frames in the centre of the hive. The cage is closed by a plastic tab beyond which the hole is filled with some fondant, and suspended with the fondant at the bottom between the frames.

We close up the hive and leave all for 24 hours. We return to the hive and make a quick check that the bees are not displaying any aggressiveness around the cage and to the queen. All seemed fine and the plastic tab is removed leaving bees external and internal to enjoy the fondant and hopefully release the queen.

After a further 2 days we return in hope that all is well and the queen has escaped from the cage. A visual inspection of the cage and no sign of a queen and a hole in the fondant. I put the cage in my suit pocket, close up the hive and now leave for 3 to 4 days for all to settle and maybe on the next inspection fingers crossed - eggs. All achieved within minutes.

Back to the car, and pack up. I remove the cage from my pocket and glimpse the sight of a leg protruding from the cage. What !!! A much closer look and my mind starts by saying that's a longer than normal body and leg - that's no worker - that's the queen. Calm panic ensues with instructions to my assistant to put her finger over the cage hole and under no circumstances remove it. At which point my assistant with finger over hole expresses concern that will she be stung. "No dear the queen will not sting you - just keep finger over hole!!!"

Back to the hive. I reopen it and replace the cage having removed some more fondant. I quickly came to the conclusion that the workers had eaten enough of the fondant to let themselves out but her ladyship was stuck!

I left the hive for a week and returned with some trepidation. Excitement! There she was, marked and strutting her stuff. Some visible eggs. What joy! I closed up the hive and left with a high level of satisfaction.

Several weeks later and all is well. She is laying well and the colony is very calm.

One lesson to learn is be more vigilant when removing the cage and ensuring all occupants have left. Probably a good lesson to learn for any aspect of beekeeping - bee vigilant!

*John Waddelove*

*Member – W&DBKA*

W&DBKA, after having spent the entire summer without an apiary are now keeping everything crossed that we have found one! We wrote an article in a local newspaper, explaining our plight and one lady came forward with a possible site. Neil Marshall has been to see it, but without the approval of our Chairman, Nigel who has yet been unable to view it, we are not in a position to proceed. Hopefully we will be able to relay some good news next month.

In the meantime, our winter programme commences on 14 October with the AGM. We currently have a position available for an apiary manager and a temporary Learning and Development Officer. Garth Matthews, our current L&D Officer, who I know many people know, wishes to



take a break for a year to fully concentrate on his own beekeeping studies and we wish him all the best.

Our winter programme continues with our Honey Show on 11 November, followed by a light-hearted quiz and nibbles on 9 December.

Our planned programme for 2016 consists of a talk on queen rearing by Nigel Perkins on 13 January, 'A year in beekeeping' by Tom Salter on 10 February and on 9 March, Nigel Semmence will be with us, informing us of the latest updates from the Ministry.

As with all our winter meetings, we will be holding a raffle at each one, the proceeds of which go into the Club funds. We are always grateful for the donation of any prizes.

We look forward to having a good turnout of members, both old and new at our meetings.

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## Reading and District Beekeepers Association



On Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> August Reading Beekeepers assembled at our recently established Association's Club Apiary for a second full summer programme apiary meeting (we met here also on 28<sup>th</sup> June and Clark Hunter hosts a weekly evening session). There was a good turnout considering the weather which delayed the start, but as we had some 'little people' with us who were keen to see some action we opened hive no 1 which appears to be queenless and broodless. We plan to unite this hive with a queen active nuc prepared earlier in the

season. As the rain became more torrential we retired to the car park for some very nice cakes and sandwiches and enjoyed the company. Once the food was finished many people drifted off, but we were pleasantly surprised to find the weather clearing! We returned to the apiary and treated all three hives and two nucs with the anti varroaMaq Strips, which we intend to remove at our next weekly session. Thanks to all for turning out and to administrators demonstrators and food providers.



Our second August activity was the Reading and District Beekeepers Honey Show which we hold annually in the Produce Tent at The Swallowfield Show on August Bank Holiday weekend 30<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> August 2015. Our judges Margaret Johnson from Southampton ably supported by husband Alan were pleased to see a good number of entries in the thirteen classes which as well as honey included beeswax classes, honey baking and a preserve plus our bee-fodder, a display of flowers favoured by bees for nectar and pollen. The honey show organisers are very grateful and encouraged to have good support from our Reading bee-

keeping membership and also welcomed several non-beekeepers in the bakery and bee fodder class. We were particularly please to have entries from a South Chilterns association beekeeper Mr R. Busby who won the novice honey class. Rising stars included Reading member Clare O'Brien, winner of the Honey For Sale class and also placed in 'light honey', 'novice', honey snap biscuits and honey lemon curd, gaining the third highest points tally in the honey show overall. We were unlucky with the weather, with the 31<sup>st</sup> having particularly bad weather, not helped by rain on the 30<sup>th</sup> which led to the large 'produce tent' letting in water, leaving us with wet coverings on our display benches, which made the 'snap' of our honey snap biscuits of rather short duration! However the Reading Beekeeping 'pavilion' (tent) remained dry thanks to a matching green 'polytarp' having been erected as a fly-sheet following our experiences on the rainy bank holiday Monday last year! On the Sunday at least honey sales were





reasonably good and members of the public showed their usual great interest in our displays and in our honeys, beeswax candles and all items in our honey show.

Reading Beekeeping Trophies will be presented at our AGM on 10<sup>th</sup> November. Points gained following judges were as follows.

J.Davey 14, Hazel Blackburn 13, Claire Obrien 8, Jenny Morgan 5, Annette Jukes 3, Mike Dabbs 2, Nigel Holt 2, Virginia Moore 2, Matthew Linnard 1, Ian Duddle 1.

Also R. Busby (SCBKA) 3 and non beekeepers Anne Roberts 3, J. Prior 3 and M. Nanning 2.

Well done to all those above and all entrants and helpers.

Pics show our show bench (note wet covering) from 'bee fodder class towards honeys' etc.

Our October meeting is on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup>, at 7.30 prompt start. This is the first of our winter programme at Caversham Methodist Hall, Highmoor Road. The subject is the Warre Beehive, with a talk and demonstration by Mr. John Howerson on this recently introduced beehive of columnar form using the bees own drawn-down comb said to mimic more closely the honey bees preferred original wild habitat nest. I am sure this will be of great interest.

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## Slough Windsor and Maidenhead Beekeepers' Society

### The first meeting of the winter schedule

The opening meeting of the 2015 winter season was led by fellow member, Jim Cooper who shared his queen rearing experiences and conducted a review of the season. Jim has been beekeeping for 33 years and in recent years, he has turned his hand to the serious matter of queen rearing.

He started with the question - Why raise queens?

As any beekeeper will know there is always a time when your honey bees need a new queen. Many beekeepers, with less experience than Jim, rely on the bees themselves to decide when to replace the queen and using swarm management techniques we try our best to ensure that they do this with as little inconvenience as possible to our neighbours and the general public.

However sometimes we need a new queen because we have lost her by accident, misadventure or because we want to change the temperament/ behaviour of a particular colony; in the latter case it is particularly important to know the provenance of a new queen.

We can buy in new queens, if it is the right time of year and they are available, but with prices stretching from £30 to £200 (as seen in a recent advertisement) then cost versus quality becomes a dilemma. Also you may wish to follow the advice that 'local' bees are better.

The bee breeders do have the advantages of being able to select good genetic lines, using large numbers of colonies and isolated apiaries to control the source of the drones, but the small scale queen rearer should still be able to achieve satisfactory results.

Jim selects the colony to breed from based on beneficial traits such as: docility, low tendency to swarm, disease tolerance, productivity and good overwintering qualities. To be able to decide which colonies to use he uses comprehensive hive records and he recommends the sample record sheets available on the BIBBA website. <http://bibba.com/>

Over the past few years Jim has been using the Jenter or Nicot method which encourages the queen to lay eggs directly into cups which can then be transferred into starter queen cells. He has found this much easier than trying to graft young larvae into homemade wax queen cups. On his first attempt he raised 8 queens from 10 transferred eggs. He used the Jenter timetable for queen rearing Excel spreadsheet available on the BIBBA website.

Jim has also learned by trial and error, and his error occurred when he discovered that all his new queen cells had been torn down by a virgin queen inadvertently left in the rearing colony!

This disaster did not deter him and he continues to raise his own queens and he advised that we should all have ago at rearing our own queens because it is interesting, adds new skills to our beekeeping experience and above all it *is* fun.

### A Review of the Year

After Jim's talk he chaired a roundup of the members' beekeeping year. It was interesting to hear about others experiences and finding out that we have had similar experiences.

Many members reported that their honey is darker in colour this year as against last year when light coloured honey dominated in the local Honey Show entries.

This year's Honey Show will take place at the next meeting; details of the classes and tips for entries can be found on the society's website: <http://swmbks.weebly.com/honey-show.html>

### Winter Meetings 2015

Our next winter meeting is when we hold our annual Members' Honey Show on Tuesday 13th October with an earlier start time of 7.00pm for setting up with judging to commence at 7.30pm.

Winter meetings are held at:

All Saints Parish Hall, Alexandra Road, Windsor SL4 1HZ.

The meetings are usually scheduled on the second Tuesday of the month beginning at 8 pm and refreshments are available.

General information and details of all our meetings can be found on our website: <http://swmbks.weebly.com/meetings.html>.

The advertisement is for Bee Basic Ltd. and features a central list of products and prices. On the left is a full-body bee suit with a hood and veil. On the right is a hooded jacket. The text is as follows:

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## ***Land for bees***

The following members of the public are offering a place for our members to keep their bees. If you are interested, please make contact with them directly.

Near beautiful Turville, Barry Haigh is offering an out-apiary site. Tel : 01491 639548

In Checkendon, Toby and Jennifer Greenbury are offering an out-apiary site. They have a large woodland garden and will provide hives etc. [toby.greenbury@wildernesscapitalpartners.com](mailto:toby.greenbury@wildernesscapitalpartners.com) or tel: 07966149321.

In Harpston, Mr Bevan Tele: 07956370830.

In Fawley, Richard Green, [Richard@Gi77.com](mailto:Richard@Gi77.com)

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## ***For your Diary***

If you subscribe to Bee Craft Magazine, you might like to join their hangouts/webinars. You will find details of how to join a session in the magazine. The dates and topics for the remainder of 2015 are:

14th October Configuration of winter hives

18th November Winter projects DIY ideas

16th December Relax - Beekeeper to Beekeeper

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## ***Association websites***

All four Federation member association websites have a lot of information – some of which may only be relevant to that association, but there is also quite a bit that is useful to us all. Here are the links for your reference:

Reading & District Beekeepers Association: <http://www.rbka.org.uk/>

South Chilterns Beekeepers' Association: <http://www.scbka.org>

Slough, Windsor & Maidenhead Beekeepers' Society: <http://swmbks.weebly.com/>

Wokingham and District Beekeepers Association: [www.wokinghambeekeepers.org.uk/](http://www.wokinghambeekeepers.org.uk/)

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## ***Useful Links, Advice and Information***

<http://www.apinews.com/> This website is a mine of information from around the world. You can subscribe to their newsletter.

<http://www.dave-cushman.net/bee/newhome.html> This website has a lot of really useful information for the beekeeper.

<http://www.beekeepingforum.co.uk/> This is a portal for all things beekeeping.

<http://www.bbka.org.uk/> The British Beekeepers Association.

<http://hymenopteragenome.org/beebase/> Beebase is a comprehensive data source for the bee research community.

<http://www.lapisonline.it/index.php/en/l-apis-excerpt> A long standing Italian publication which now has an English section.

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## ***NBU Advice for Obtaining Bees:***

**Join Beebase** - By joining BeeBase you can access beekeeping information and ask for advice or help from the Bee Unit: <https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/beebase>.

**Your Regional Bee Inspectors are:**

**Southern Region:** Nigel Semmence at: [nigel.semmence@fera.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:nigel.semmence@fera.gsi.gov.uk),

The main website is: <https://secure.csl.gov.uk/beebase/public/Contacts/contacts.cfm>  
National Bee Unit, Central Science Laboratory, Sand Hutton, York YO41 1 LZ, tel: 01 904 462 510, email: <mailto:nbu@fera.gsi.gov.uk>.

**South Eastern Region:** Mr Alan Byham, fax/tel: 01306 611 016

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**Contributions to the Editor** are always welcome as long as they are signed. Anonymous letters and letters not in English will not be published. The Editor reserves the right to withhold names.

**Contributions**, including emails, to arrive with the Editor by the 20th of the month for publication by the 7<sup>th</sup> of the following month. Contributions received after this may be held over for a later month.

**Advertisement entries**, to be received by the Advertisement Manager in advance of the 20th of every month. Rates: 2 Lines for £1.00; Commercial rates: £1.00 per line. Please make cheques payable to FBBKA. To be sent to the Advertisement Manager: Mr Jon Davey, 107 Northcourt Avenue, Reading RG2 7HG. Tel: 0118 975 0734.