



# 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

May has continued to be a miserable time as far as the weather has been concerned – although despite the cold the rape has blossomed and the apple trees are dressed in pale pink. The bees seem to be venturing out and reports from most seem to be indicating slowly improving colonies with good evidence of eggs, brood and larvae. It is interesting to hear that Bob and Karen who have provided the In My Apiary piece this month, have already drawn off some 20lbs of honey this year! I have had my first personal experience of a swarm into a redcurrant bush of all destinations! I watched it swirl above my head whilst weeding the vegetable patch. I was sure it had come from my hive, but on thinking about it this could not have been the case due to the timing of a recent artificial swarm. It was fascinating to watch and quite tricky to collect!

The picture to the right was taken at a recent SCBKA apiary meeting and is a lovely example of a Bee Bole. This is a purpose built hole in the wall into which a skep was placed. This one is from a house in Chalkhouse Green.

I would like to encourage you to look at the websites for all four of the Federation member associations. There is a lot of really useful information on all of them – I have listed the links at the end of the newsletter.

Finally, it was brought to my attention that a reference in the 'In My Apiary' article last month lost its link to a You Tube piece on Nosema. My apologies and here it is - ([Nosema guide, University of Florida](#))



*Sue Remenyi*

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## In My Apiary

We've plenty of space for honey bee colonies on our homestead. We have about 40 acres of rides and paddocks as we run a riding stables and a roofing business. The location is almost ideal, with Reading suburbs on one side full of well planted gardens and an open country with much woodland on the other. Oil-seed rape is the main crop in the

area and we have a field next door. Reading folk used to ride-out here on bicycles in earlier times to collect wild cherry plums and the area between Emmer Green and Woodcote was known locally as 'cherry country', giving plenty of *prunus* for the bees to forage. I found our first colony of bees hanging on a branch while riding five years ago and returned with the Land Rover, stood on the bonnet and hived them off.

Despite all this space Karen and I prefer to keep our bees in the garden, facing the house where we can keep a close eye on them. The grass is kept close trimmed and behind the hives is an open piece, the main feature being a large crack-willow tree which is a target for swarming bees. Luckily being roofers we've got long ladders!

At time of writing (20th May) we have had two swarms from our colonies and have bottled 40 half pound jars of new season's honey, so you can see our bees are well advanced and we're glad to say continuing to do well. The late snow and cold March did however cost us a colony. Despite having fondant and stores in the hive the bees were found dead in a cluster with bodies inside cells head-first - classic signs of starvation. From what we hear from fellow Reading beekeepers this has sadly been rather too common this spring. However the bees in our remaining six hives are doing well, cups and swarm cells to be dealt with, good looking populations, queens, brood pattern and eggs and larvae in all hives. This season does seem to be late but we are expecting another good beekeeping year with honey yields of at least 100 kilos and we are currently active in removing and extracting full frames with the rape in blossom.

Our bees had Apiguard in the autumn, and up to now we have not used an oxalic trickle because varroa do not seem to be a problem in our apiary. I make my own entry guards which are slides that can be moved over the entrances, close trimmed grass and these seem to keep the field mice out! I also have hives with deeps and supers of my own design which I make using wood salvaged from roof joists, purlins and the like. As this wood is of substantial thickness it makes for a sturdy and well insulated hive. I wrap horse blankets around the hives in cold weather and I adjust the entrance size regularly - I tend to restrict the entrance to the minimum to allow easy bee movement daily, for example, opening-up in the evenings when returning bee's build-up etc.

'Honey For Sale' is seen outside our house and at our stables where riders congregate for their mounts. Karen's account book shows that beekeeping for us is a satisfying and worthwhile hobby!

*Bob & Karen Challis. Emmer Green, Reading.*

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## **Wokingham & District Beekeepers Association Report**

On Sunday 21st April we had our first visit of the year to the Club apiary. All six hives had made it through the winter and were laying, although the brood nests were still very small. We were also fortunate to see all the queens, so a positive start to the new season. However, at our next open session on the 6th May we did not see any of the

queens and most of the bees were quite bad tempered. Like us they don't like this changeable weather although they were all holding their own.

On Tuesday 23rd April the members of the microscopy group met to indulge in some slicing and dicing as we would be testing for Acarine and Nosema. When testing for Acarine a full test requires 30 bees per sample but as suggested by Garth, most people brought about a dozen for practice purposes. There are graphs available online which explain how you can estimate the size of the infection. For example, if you find 3 bees in the sample of 30, then there is a 99% possibility that the colony has 47.5% of its population infected with acarine. They also need to be "flying bees" rather than young bees. If you cannot obtain fresh bees, then collect them when convenient and freeze for at least 36 hours. They will take approximately a day to thaw out and should then be stored in either IPA (alcohol) or good quality vodka.

Garth then demonstrated how to pin your bee to an acarine cork, remove the head and collar and then check the trachea, under the microscope, for any signs of the mite. The trachea should be a milky white colour and clear. The bee is laid on its back on the cork and the double pin inserted at an angle through the thorax, between the second and third pair of legs. You then take your forceps, gently circle the head and pull it forward. It should detach from the abdomen quite easily. However, for some of us this was quite difficult as the bee kept sliding up the pin. Once we had mastered the art of pinning we then removed the head. The next step was to remove the collar, which the experts can manage in one easy movement but some of us had to resort to scissors to cut it free. Because our bees were fresh they were very moist so a tissue was used to remove some of the liquid. It was then possible to see the trachea. We were all fortunate in that we did not find any signs of acarine.

The next stage was to check for Nosema which is a microspordian fungus which severely interferes with the bee's ability to digest food, particularly pollen and this causes dysentery.

We each took our remaining bees and removed legs and wings so we were just left with the abdomens. These were put in a mortar, a small amount of water was added and they were ground into a paste. This was then put on a slide and looked at under the compound microscope. We did not expect to find anything but unfortunately someone did, so we all had the opportunity to look at a live example. Now that Fumidil B has been withdrawn as a treatment the suggestion is to replace the brood comb as soon as possible but success or otherwise really depends on the level of infestation. It was also suggested you can try a shook swarm. However, do not smoke the bees before you do this, as you don't want them to fill up on stores and take honey which might carry the Nosema spores.

A very useful and productive evening when you realise how much it costs to send samples away for testing when, with a little practice, you can do it yourself.

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## South Chilterns Beekeepers Association

SCBKA Apiary visit, Chalkhouse Green 18th May 2013

John Hall's farm at Chalkhouse Green was the venue for this month's apiary visit. The weather was lovely and it was Ron Crocker's 90th birthday, so it was a Grand Day Out.

Although last summer was so dreadful, and several hives were lost, the four remaining ones all survived the winter.

No. 1 was on old black combs, and the queen (born last year) had started to lay, so the plan was to carry out a Bailey comb change. After providing a new brood box of foundation above the National brood and a half, it was apparent a week later that the brood was not expanding. The queen was still laying in the half, but at a very slow rate, and it was obvious that the colony was not strong enough to draw new comb. The comb change was abandoned, and as the old dirty-comb brood box was empty anyway, it was taken away, and the struggling queen snuggled up in the half with a contact feeder directly on the frames. A few days before the apiary meeting we had two very hot days with temperatures up to 24°C, and the 2:1 sugar syrup flooded out of the contact feeder - soaking the bees, filling the floor and dripping out onto the ground. There was a rapid clean-up job, and the contact feeder was replaced with a rapid feeder. On the day of the visit, Ron noticed a few light brown specks on the front of the hive, which might be indicative of digestive problems. Worryingly, he also noticed dead bees on the ground and felt the numbers were greater than should be expected at this time of year, which is suggestive of a poisoning incident due to agricultural spraying. They hadn't taken much syrup and the colony had probably lost lots of bees; those dead on the ground were the ones who made it back that far, so many more might have been lost in the field.

On inspection, Reg Hook spotted an unsealed queen cell, and although there were still eggs present – plucky little queen – from their position lying sideways in the cells, they were at least 24 hours old. The queen had gone yesterday. The hive will be left alone for a few weeks to see if they can raise a new queen, but it's not looking good so far, and the syrup is not being eaten, so the hive may yet fail.

No. 2 hive is a Commercial formed by an artificial swarm manoeuvre last year. It also had a little heap of dead bees on the floor, corroborating the possibility of poisoning. On inspection though, the brood is expanding, and the queen is re-laying in the centres of the combs where the first lot of brood has already hatched. Reg said "we won't see the queen with them running about on the combs like this", followed two seconds later by "there she is" (I think he must be a queen-charmer) so we took the opportunity to mark her. The one unsealed queen cell found was removed, and he felt the hive might have swarmed but for the large number of bees that must have been lost. The sequel to this story is that two weeks later they made more queen cells, so an artificial swarm was carried out. Fingers crossed.

No. 3 failed last summer, so the next hive for inspection was No.4. This one also had its little pile of dead bees outside, and it was undergoing a Bailey comb change. The old dirty-comb box had been taken away, and having been given a National brood box of foundation on top of two halves on 1st May, by the 18th half of the foundation was drawn and the queen had already started laying. Reg found her and I marked her, but .....disaster. Despite vigorous shaking and testing on gloves, suit and toolbox, the marker pen flooded and comprehensively whitewashed the queen from head to toe, even smothering one eye. Need I say I was not popular? A queen damaged in this way is usually killed by the bees, and they will draw new queen cells to replace her. In hope rather than expectation, she was put back in the new brood box, with the queen excluder under the half below that, confining her – if she survived – to the boxes we wanted her to stay in. If she didn't survive, I'd have to whip the excluder out again so



that a newly-emerged queen could get out of the hive on a mating flight. The bottom half brood, underneath the queen excluder, will be left for three weeks for the brood to hatch out, and then we can take it away and restore the configuration to the normal pattern. In the meantime, poor old Ron, who goes bare-handed, was being stung repeatedly on his hands by this grumpy lot. He eventually realised they had taken exception to the treatment cream he had put on his hands that day, and solved the problem by shoving his hands in his pockets. This story does have a happy ending, though; the queen is still with us two weeks later and still lying well, and I can stop wringing my hands in remorse.

Hive No.5, although with a similar little collection of dead bees outside, was ticking along nicely, given that it was a nucleus formed last year. Reg did a tilt check, looking for queen cells between the National brood and the half by tipping up the half to look underneath it. This is the place they would usually build queen cells and it saves disturbing every comb. Although there was a super in place, the bees weren't making much use of it, and Reg gave us the useful tip of taking the queen excluder out to encourage them to go upstairs. He left to us the tricky judgement of deciding when they'd been encouraged enough, so that we got it back in place before queenie decided to go and have a go up there herself. They seem to have got the hang of it now, after nearly two weeks, so it's just been replaced.



The day finished with a brilliant birthday cake and candles for Ron's 90th birthday, and with a superb cream tea with scones, cream and jam from John's blackcurrant crop to add to the cakes.

The plant sale raised over £90 for Soundabout, so many thanks to everyone who brought and bought plants and made donations; that's an amazing amount of money for a fairly small group of people to generate, and it's much appreciated. Thanks also to the helpers who worked so hard to feed the small

group with the combined appetite of a much larger one!

And there's just one postscript. The following week I checked with the neighbouring bee-friendly farm managers to ascertain that the only spraying done was with a fungicide, and sent in samples of the dead bees to the NBU for analysis.

Meryl Toomey



## John Belcher

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## Reading Beekeepers Association Report

Our first apiary visit of the summer season on Sunday 28th was well attended at Peter Kimber's garden apiary in Caversham Height's. Pete has frequently hosted our first of the season over the years as his garden, something of a sun trap protected by an arbour of tall trees, together with his 'bee gazebo' and early tree blossoms give his bees a good start.

The conditions however we're not ideal, not raining but rather cold at about 10 C maximum during the inspections so the three colonies were not kept open too long.

Hives one and two had good populations with sealed brood, eggs and larvae seen, some small cups but no queen cells. Due to the cold a search for queens was not undertaken, but these two colonies should do well. Hive three had a smaller population but with some signs of queen activity, bees carrying pollen loads were seen in all three hives but not much flying today! With the subsequent warmer weather and flush of blossom all the colonies have a good chance of thriving. With many thanks to Peter Kimber for hosting us and for a very generous act after the meeting.

Peper Kimber has kindly donated his honey bee colonies and beekeeping equipment to Reading & district Beekeepers Association for the benefit of new member's needing their first colony. A draw has already taken place and we have three lucky recipients of the bees. The kit will be used by Reading members in need. Pete has been a stalwart Reading beekeeper for many years and only a few months ago was seen swaying on a ladder 15 ft up a roadside tree in Theale, with loppers cutting off branches with the last recalcitrant bees of a large and particularly aerial swarm to join their sisters in a box on the sheet below. On another occasion he was found 20ft up overlooking the quad at Reading Boy's School, without any kind of comforting parapet hanging-over the edge to scoop a large swarm under the bulging decorated architrave below! Apparently immune from any signs of vertigo.

Thanks for your generosity Peter, and we all hope you'll be around Reading Beekeepers for a good long time.

### June Visit.

Giles and Emma Mc Loughlin will be our hosts on Sunday 23rd June starting at 11-00 AM. Splendid rural location at Crays Pond near Goring, with fields of oilseed rape all around, big colonies in new equipment, so there should be plenty of action. See you there!



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## **Slough Windsor & Maidenhead Beekeepers Society**

### **March Meeting**

In March we were delighted to welcome Nigel Semmence, our Regional Bee Inspector to talk to us on the subject of bee health. As an introduction Nigel gave us an overview of FERA, its role and activities. FERA was formed in 1952 at a time of sugar rationing primarily to provide inspectors who would check that the bees for whom extra rations were being claimed actually existed! But there was also the more serious need to monitor AFB and subsequently EFB diseases.

Nigel shared with us the results of the apiary surveys last year which showed on a map where there had been identified incidences of AFB and EFB and told us about the research being done into modelling the incidences of EFB. He then went on to discuss the other diseases that we could encounter in our hives such as *Nosema* and the *Varroa destructor mite*. There is apparently a lot of research being undertaken particularly on Varroa and he brought encouraging news about the new Mite Away Quick (MAQ) treatment that will soon be available; the treatment is based on formic acid and early indications are that it is quite successful.

Nigel also informed us about the ever present upcoming risks too and warned us all to be vigilant with regard to Asian hornets, small hive beetles and tropilaelaps.

It was a well-attended talk and everyone enjoyed the opportunity to ask questions of a real expert.

### **April Meeting**

The April meeting was the last of the winter talks and it was given by our very own Clive Winslow on the very timely subject of Swarm Management. With the bee season being so delayed this year due to the cold weather we hoped that there would be a few weeks grace before our bees think about swarming however the main message from Clive was that we all need to be planning ahead and managing our swarms in advance. He suggested that we really need to be looking into all our colonies every seven days, rather than the recommended ten days because in his experience he had found worker bees moving one to three days old eggs and even up to two day old larvae into queen cups which could result in sealed queen cells appearing much quicker.

Clive also informed us about the various methods of undertaking an artificial swarm to deter swarming. He handed around Snelgrove boards for us to examine and explained how they can be used to deter swarming whilst keeping the hive in one place. One of Clive's invaluable tips was that when inspecting several hives: do not destroy queen cells immediately as they may be needed for a queen less hive you find later.

Once again it was a well-attended evening and everyone, old and new beekeepers alike would have gained something to take away.

### **Apiary Meetings**

April saw the start of this season's meetings at the Society's apiary. The two meetings in April demonstrated how much difference a fortnight of kinder weather can make. The first meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup>, a cool day, revealed colonies in reasonable health but showing very little in the way of brood and pollen stores however two weeks later it was all change with healthy looking brood patterns and stores which gave the apiary team the confidence to add some supers to the strongest hives. Glynis Morse provided much appreciated sustenance in the form of hot drinks and sweet treats.

May has seen some improvement in the weather and all the colonies are doing well, including the one that was the result of uniting two weak colonies.

The apiary meetings are an excellent way to gain experience handling bees for beginners but are just as valuable for the experienced beekeepers who may just need to compare notes or pick the brains of fellow beekeepers.

Details of the meetings can be found on our excellent new website:

<http://swmbks.weebly.com/meetings.html> and the apiary blog will provide an update for anyone who has missed a visit. The meetings at the apiary will continue on alternate Sunday afternoons until the end of October. The meetings in June are scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> June.

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## ***National Honey Show – 24-26 October 2013***

Are you new to beekeeping? Would you like to see what honey, combs, wax and mead should really look like? The National Honey Show is the 'gold standard' honey show, the equivalent of Wimbledon for tennis players. This year is the 82nd National Honey Show and you can expect to see almost 250 classes and beekeepers from all over the world. Just walking around the displays is an education in itself. A full programme of workshops and lectures will run during the show and there are a wide selection of trade stands with lots of equipment and books to buy.

Guest speakers this year include, once again, a great cast from the world of beekeeping: Norman Carreck, Celia Davis, Ricarda Kather, Mike Palmer and Dr Robert Paxton will all be on the main lecture stage. BeeCraft have a great lecture theatre in the recital room on Friday and there will be a full day of lectures in the recital room on Saturday for those relatively new to beekeeping or those wishing to refresh some skills and techniques. For the first time this year there will be lectures on Thursday morning starting at 9.30am, with the official opening at 1.45pm. On top of that is another great line up of very popular workshops and The Honey Show. If that isn't enough then you can get some bargains, advice and a chance to socialise in the trade hall.

Also new for 2013: on the Saturday we have a New to Beekeeping day with a lecture programme for new beekeepers in the Recital Room (of course everyone is welcome!). There will be lectures on Swarms and Swarm Control; Common Bee Diseases; Products of the Hive; Tasks Throughout the Year.

If you have already had success at your local or county show, why not enter some of the classes? Many counties have their own classes within the show – or you can put yourself up against the experts in the open classes to see how you measure up. As you do your extracting, why not keep that perfect frame aside? A little planning now will give you lots of potential show entries.

The 2013 schedule of classes will be published in August 2013 but in the meantime, you can get a good idea of what is needed by looking at the 2012 schedule. You can find this and lots of interesting information about the show on the N.H.S. website - [www.honeyshow.co.uk](http://www.honeyshow.co.uk)

The show is at St Georges College, Weybridge, Surrey, KT15 2QS on Thursday 24th (1.45pm to 6pm) Friday 25th (9am to 6pm) and Saturday 26th October (9am to 4.30pm). Admission for non-members is £15, but you can become a member of the National Honey Show for £12 and then entry is free. Accompanied children of 16 years and under are also free. You can join at the door or from the website [www.honeyshow.co.uk](http://www.honeyshow.co.uk)

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## ***BBKA PRESS RELEASE - 23 May 2013***

### **Swarms of honey bees: BBKA gives guidance on what the public can do to help**

Despite greater awareness by the public of the huge contribution honey bees make to our food supplies through pollination, not to mention the honey they produce, a swarm of bees still has the propensity to scare. The public should not be alarmed if they see or



come across a swarm of honey bees. They are doing what honey bees do naturally and are not remotely interested in humans. In fact before leaving their hive the bees fill up their stomachs with honey and are rather mellow; their sole intention is to find a new home to build-up a new colony. As long as the swarm is not provoked it will not do any harm but it is important that the bees are collected by an experienced beekeeper. If left to their own devices they may choose to set up home in the nearest convenient spot which could be a chimney or other inaccessible place.

The long winter and late cool spring this year may delay the start of the honey bee swarming season by around four weeks but as soon honey bee colonies are big enough to run out of space in their hives they are likely to swarm. The BBKA urges members of the public to learn how to spot a honey bee swarm and to know what to do when they see one. This is especially important this year when every swarm not collected by a beekeeper could mean the death of that colony in a year when winter losses are expected to be bigger than ever. We need to gather all the swarms we can to build up bee colonies again.

Jane Moseley, BBKA General Secretary, gives some advice: "Honey bees swarm as nature's way of increasing the number of colonies. With honey bee numbers under threat we can ill afford to lose swarms. As long as it is safe and practicable, beekeepers are keen to collect them and give them a new home. Swarms left uncollected are unlikely to survive, which means lost honey production but even more importantly, fewer of these hard working insects to pollinate crops, including our favourite fruits and vegetables.

"However, people often mistake groups of other types of bees or wasps for honey bees. Three out of four calls to the British Beekeepers Association are actually about wasps' nests, bumblebee sightings, or other flying insects and not honey bees. The BBKA website has pictures and information to help people to determine if what they have seen is a swarm of honey bees or some other type of insect. Check here [http://www.bbka.org.uk/help/do\\_you\\_have\\_a\\_swarm.php](http://www.bbka.org.uk/help/do_you_have_a_swarm.php) for more information. The public can help by contacting a beekeeper as soon as possible on sighting the swarm - details of the nearest volunteer swarm collector can be found on the BBKA website ."

The BBKA website shows details of swarm collectors in England. Information about what to do in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland is available on the websites of each of their national beekeeping associations.

### **BBKA's Key Facts About Swarms**

Why do bees swarm?

- Honey bees swarm because they are looking for a new site to form a new colony. It is a natural and positive means of population increase.

What is a swarm?

- Each swarm contains a queen bee and around 20,000 worker bees
- Wasps and bumblebees don't swarm, so if you see a swarm it will be made up of honey bees.

When do bees swarm?

- The swarming season is from April to July, but the peak is from early May to Mid June.

Keep calm and carry on!

- Swarms are not dangerous unless disturbed or aggravated (for example if sprayed with water). Left alone, swarms are harmless.

- Because they only rarely survive in the wild, honey bee swarms need to be captured by trained personnel/beekeepers and placed in beehives where they can form a new productive colony. This needs to be done as soon as possible because once the swarm takes up residence it may be difficult to remove them safely, for example if they choose a chimney or other inaccessible place in a building.
- Your local swarm coordinator can be found here [http://www.bbka.org.uk/help/find\\_a\\_swarm\\_coordinator.php](http://www.bbka.org.uk/help/find_a_swarm_coordinator.php) All are volunteers.
- Alternatively, contact the local council or police station who can also offer advice.

#### How to help honey bees

- Beekeepers are essential to maintaining a healthy UK bee population, but beekeeping is not for everyone. So the BBKA (British Beekeepers Association) has set up a scheme called Adopt A Beehive. Members of the public make an annual donation of £30 to the scheme which supports research and education into beekeeping and bee health. Supporters receive a welcome pack, a quarterly newsletter and regular updates from the regional beehive they have adopted. More information is available at [www.adoptabeehive.co.uk](http://www.adoptabeehive.co.uk).

#### About The BBKA

With around 24,000 members, the British Beekeepers Association (BBKA) is the leading organisation supporting honey bees and beekeepers within the UK. It aims to promote and further the craft of beekeeping and to advance the education of the public in the importance of bees in the environment.

[www.bbka.org.uk](http://www.bbka.org.uk)

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#### ***Glass available for diy solar wax extractor – free to collect***

After some home repairs, I have 9 double-glazed panes going spare and wondered if anyone might like some for building a solar wax extractor. They are just the glass units, no frames. Perhaps you could kindly let everyone know? [meryl.toomey@btinternet.com](mailto:meryl.toomey@btinternet.com)

The sizes in centimetres are:

52 x 103 - 2 off

48 x 103

50 x 103 - 2 off

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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.

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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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**Letters 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 will be held over for a later month.

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