

1923 - 2020



Medway
Beekeepers
Association

Medway Beekeepers Association

Celebrating over 95 years of support for beekeeping
and beekeepers in and around the Medway Towns



Newsletter April 2020

This Newsletter is being sent out early this month to appraise you all of MBKA's necessary response to the COVID19 outbreak that the country is dealing with at the present time Please see below for details.

The Committee met on Tuesday 17th March and has made the following decisions:

- 1) To cancel all meetings until the end of June. A decision will then be made regarding meetings in July and August. We will also keep the Swarm Phone operation under constant review.
- 2) 'The BBKA Examinations Board has decided they must act within the Government guidelines and **cancel the Examinations on March 21st**. The decision has not been made lightly but we do not wish to put invigilators or candidates at risk for an activity which is not essential. The free transfer of applications will extend to **March 2021**. ... The Board will be keeping the situation regarding the practical assessments under close review, I will keep you informed'.

With these instructions in mind all Modules Examinations are cancelled and it is also highly unlikely that the practical assessments (namely **Basic and Honey Bee Health Assessments**) will take place this year, for the same reasons.

- 3) Bee Chat is cancelled until further notice.
- 4) The City Way Apiary Site is closed to all visitors until further notice. However, the bees will be checked and managed by the Apiary Team on a weekly basis.
- 5) The Swarm phone will still operate but we need more volunteers to operate it and make the system effective.

The effects of these decisions unfortunately are:

March to June's Events and Meetings:

Saturday 21st March 2019

Indoor Meeting – Mark Ballard and Tony Edwards – Starting the Year

Time: 2pm until 5pm

Venue: Wainscott Community Hall, 16 – 18 Holly Road, Wainscott, ME2 4L

This event has been cancelled.

Monday 23rd March 2020
Introductory Course – Session 1

Monday 30th March 2020
Introductory Course – Session 2

Monday 6th April 2020
Introductory Course – Session 3

The first three sessions of this course will be rearranged as soon as it is reasonably possible to do. See the website for up to date details.

Wednesday 25th March 2020
Bee Chat

All Bee Chat meetings are cancelled until further notice. See the website for any up to date details.

4th April 2020
Apiary Open Day – This is the first of the new season.

The Apiary Site will be closed until further notice, to all but those undertaking hive inspections. All Apiary Open Days are Cancelled. See the website for any up to date details. Rotas and Inspection Record Sheets will be available on the Member's Area.



Spring 2020
Convention

3rd to the 5th April
BBKA Spring Convention
Harper Adams University
Newport, Shropshire, TF10 8NB

*"It is with great regret that we have to advise that the **BBKA 2020 Spring Convention** - scheduled to take place at Harper Adams University 3-5 April - **has been cancelled**. The Spring Convention Committee and the BBKA Executive Committee reviewed the situation over the weekend and took the decision to cancel. Given the age of many attendees is over 60, the aim is to minimise the risk of COVID19 among participants, traders, staff of BBKA and staff and students of Harper Adams.
A full refund will be made for all bookings made via the BBKA".*

18th April 2020
English Festival
Venue: Riverside Country Park, Rainham
All day event.

This event has been cancelled by Medway Council

16th May 2020
Outdoor Meeting
Venue to be agreed
2pm – 5pm

All outdoor events are cancelled until the end of June. See the website for future updates.



Swarm Phone 2020: We urgently require more volunteers to do deliver this important service.

Swarms may be a distant thought at the moment especially with the weather we've been having but it won't be long until swarm season is upon us and with that comes the swarm phone!

For those of you that might not know we run a voluntary swarm collection service between April and September and for it to be as successful as previous years I'm after volunteers. There are a couple of roles which need covering:

Swarm Phone Holders: each week a different volunteer will 'man' the phone, dealing with reports of swarms and passing the details on to swarm collectors local to the swarm. You're not expected to go out to all the swarms the week you have the phone just co-ordinate the swarm collectors. You will also have to arrange the passing on of the phone to the next swarm phone holder usually on a Sunday. If you have any preference for weeks you wish to cover, then let me know, and I certainly won't stop you volunteering for more than one!

Swarm Collectors: these are people who are willing to go and collect swarms in their local area, again you're not expected to be available 24/7. If you can only do weekends or are going on holiday just make a note in your email along with what areas you can collect swarms in. You're also not expected to keep all the swarms you collect for those we need...

Swarm Adopters: we need a list of beekeepers willing to adopt the swarms into their apiaries. There's no guarantee we can supply you with one but if you are in need / want a swarm let me know. We ask that you be flexible and understand that swarm collectors may not be able to keep them for extended periods of time for you to collect

If anyone is interested in any of the above please email me at: Sonia.belsey@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk. Please let me know the following: what role/s you'd like to do, a contact number, what area you can cover and any dates you would like and any dates that you are not available.

Look forward to hearing from you!

Sonia Belsey (Swam Phone Co-ordinator)

Website Update:

For the next few months it is important that everyone looks regularly at the websites for important updates to this present difficult situation.

Please let me know of any difficulties you may have when using the Member's Area and I will reset your password for you.

Information will be posted on both websites so please check both.

Paul Lawrence (Website Manager)

Facebook: Will also carry up to date information.

Join our Facebook page for information, updates and events:

<https://www.facebook.com/medwaybka/>

This Year's Meetings:

A full list of this year's meetings with updates can be viewed by going to the Member's Website: [click here](#)

And Finally:

Many thanks to all who have contributed to the newsletter at this difficult time. Please remember if anyone has any questions, queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact any of us. Paul Lawrence and John Chapman at the address shown below. But equally you can contact most members of the committee by going to the 'contact us' tab in the members area.

Contact Details:

Chairman

John Chapman
john.chapman@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk

Newsletter and Website Enquiries

Paul Lawrence
paul.lawrence@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk

STOP PRESS:

BIBBA Helping Bees Live with Varroa

24th May 2020

Venue: Ettington Community Centre Warwickshire CV37 7SX

With the ever-increasing Covid-19 actions being put in place by the medical experts and government, I'm sure you will understand that we have taken the reluctant decision to cancel this event to protect the health of the beekeepers, transport staff, helpers and presenters.

Anyone who has purchased a ticket will receive a full refund which has been be enacted but may take a few days to wash through to your account. We still intend to hold the event at some point after things have settled down a little and may be back in touch to make you aware when tickets are once again on sale.

If you have booked on any other BIBBA paid events, we will similarly refund you. Thank you once again for your understanding in these challenging times.

Please keep safe and well.

Best Regards
Ian King
BIBBA south East Regional Co-Ordinator