
THE BUZZ

Westerham Beekeepers'

newsletter

April 2024

published every other month

Issue Two

Welcome:

So ... the new season beckons with a vengeance. The first swarms have been seen, the training apiary is up and running again, and we have been very successful in getting Asian Hornet traps spread far and wide across our territory. Good news for prevention! You should now be inspecting the traps regularly, both to make sure they are still charged, and to release by-catch.

Please take note of the many events this summer – our own three educational and sociable apiary visits, and a series of summer fetes around the neighbourhood.

We hope you enjoy this latest newsletter and thank you to all who have contributed.

Chairman's Chat:

Swarm season: has started early, on 12 April, with one in Crockham Hill.

Indications of intentions to swarm include: a full brood nest; drones matured and ready for action circa. two weeks after hatching; a proliferation of queen cups; and scouts sniffing around spare bee equipment or bait hives. Make a plan, have your kit ready and good luck - it's always fun and often educational! Please ask if help is required.

Asian hornets: thank you to everyone for a magnificent club-wide effort in monitoring for Asian hornet queens emerging from hibernation. No early signs of activity have been found – phew. Any presence in the area may be more evident if, or when, more abundant Asian hornet workers are around from June onwards. It does seem, from genetic analysis by FERA, that the north Oxted

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nests (primary & secondary), were not related to other nests found in the UK and were destroyed before *gyne*s (future queens) were produced. Let's hope so.

BBKA Spring Convention: It was great to see club members at Harper Adams University in Shropshire – lots of lectures, workshops, networking and ogling at bee keeping kit!

These events are great opportunities to tap into new ideas and to bring them into our beekeeping.

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The BIBBA conference and this one both stressed the importance of only using locally produced bees rather than bought and brought in bees, emphasising the need for clubs like ours to produce more of its own, for its own.

Varroa resistance: and with apologies for the shameless plug, *The Honey Bee Solution to Varroa* was launched at the BBKA Spring Convention. This book charts the project that a group of us at the club started in 2017 to understand and select for varroa resistant traits and is intended as a practical guide for beekeepers. Proceeds are going to the charity Bees for Development.

We will discuss varroa resistance and see how the bees achieve this at the club visit to my apiary on Saturday 22 June – see What's On, on page 3.



Photo: Steve McGrath

Steve Riley

Things to do next month:

Time your inspections to dodge the spring showers. It can be difficult to find the right moment, but the bees are developing anyway, and the first swarms have already happened. If you don't inspect weekly, there may be trouble ahead! Pick your moments and be ready for anything.

Have a swarm management plan. See the Westerham Beekeepers' website for the simplest [plan](#) and the Chairman's advice on page 1 for indications of potential for swarms.

Swarm control when you can't find the queen. Oh yes, of course, this is going to happen one day! You are busy going through that lovely colony you set up from a split last year where you never managed to find and mark the queen. Now they are building nicely, and you find queen cells. What to do? You've been twice through the frames, and you still can't find her, and they'll get grumpy soon. There's a way to do it, but you'll need a spare hive or nuc (you should have one anyway).

1. Move the original **parent colony** hive away, at least one metre and preferably more, and face the entrance in a different direction so the flying bees can't find it.
2. Now put the spare (new) hive or nuc in the old location - the flying bees will return here. Take a frame with plenty of eggs, larvae, and some nurse bees but **no queen cells** from the first hive and move this to the spare hive/nuc. This is your **artificial swarm**.
3. Fill out the rest of the new box with frames and foundation or drawn comb.
4. Add supers from the original parent colony, or feed if there aren't any supers.

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5. Inspect both colonies after 7 days, to work out where the queen was. The colony that has the queen will have new eggs.
6. The other colony should have made emergency queen cells. Thin these down to one good queen cell and let the bees do the rest over the next three weeks.

All swarm control methods work on breaking up the Holy Trinity of queen, brood, and flying bees. The reason this method works is that you separate the flying bees from most of the brood and maybe the queen. If the queen goes with the parent colony, they will lose their swarming impulse as they lose the flying bees. They will then tear down any swarm cells. If the queen is in the artificial swarm, then they should be weakened enough to reduce the swarm impulse. But the odds are that she will be in the parent colony. Either way, you have disrupted the three elements that cause a colony to swarm.



Annie Robinson swarm collecting in Crockham Hill
April 2024
Photo: Camilla Downing

What's On - Dates for the diary & future events:

I hope you enjoyed the last of our winter talks. I found Andy Barnes-Willis's talk on forage especially enjoyable, and who knew that we were going to be treated to an old-fashioned slide projector? His month-by-month forage handout has already been circulated separately.

Training apiary sessions take place every two weeks during the active season – see page 5. Here are the other planned dates and activities for the summer:

Saturday 18th May – Asian Hornet Track and Trace at Peter Cobley's house / apiary.

Saturday 22nd June – “Varroa Resistant Workshop” at Steve Riley's apiary.

Saturday 27th July - Apiary Demonstration at Johnny Pym and Carol Taylor's apiary.

All the summer activities take place on a Saturday afternoon, normally starting at 2:30pm with something educational, usually in a bee suit. Address details will follow. When it's an apiary demonstration, it normally involves an experienced beekeeper opening and inspecting the host's bee colonies.

We then retire to the host's garden or house (weather dependent) for afternoon tea and cakes. This is also your chance to enter our informal baking contest (no prizes awarded, but please bring something with you).

We will hold two of our more familiar apiary demonstrations, in June and July. Before that, in May, we will have an Asian Hornet Track and Trace educational session, which will be led by our own Peter Cobley, who has experience of these things, having been to Jersey during the heights of their tracking activities.

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If you are willing to host an event or would like to inspect someone else's colonies, please let me know.

Summer fetes – volunteers required!

The Westerham Beekeepers' stand will be at the following fetes this summer:

29th June LIMPSFIELD at 12.00 pm

6th July CROCKHAM HILL at 2.00 pm

13th July FOUR ELMS at 1.00 pm

25th/26th August OXTED & EDENBRIDGE SHOW

14th September WESTERHAM

Andrew Smith and Sue Bradshaw-Smith organise the teams for the fetes and would love to have volunteers to help with the various stand jobs.

These include:

Setting up at the start.

Manning the stall - This can be selling the honey on display, talking about bees or helping people look at the observation hive.

Packing up at the end.

Everything is provided for the stand (including an Observation Hive) so you just need to turn up and follow the plan for the day. It's a great day out and if enough people volunteer, the time we will require you to be available to man the stand will be minimal.

We do need a MINIMUM number of volunteers per fete.

Three volunteers for setting up the stand - One hour before event start time. We may ask you if you would be willing to transport some extra items to the site.

Three volunteers for packing away the stand – One hour after finish of event. We may ask you if you would be willing to help take things away, i.e. unsold honey.

Three volunteers to man the stand at ANY ONE TIME. We will divide the duration of the fete into hourly time slots for 3+ people.

Any club members are welcome to come along even those without their own bees. It's a wonderful chance for you to spend some time just "talking bees" and realising just how much you know.

It's always a very satisfying day and you get to meet lots of people who are genuinely interested to find out more about our busy hive friends. The Observation Hive is very popular with all age groups and fascinating to watch yourselves.

Please contact Sue or Andrew if you can help: susan.bradshaw.smith@gmail.com or mobile 07956 439925

Finally, please let me know if you have any ideas or suggestions for topics for next winter's talk series and if you would like to provide an article or photos for a future newsletter, we'd love to hear from you.

Mark Waddington

Treasurer's Note:

The club has, so far, spent almost £1,200 on Trappit bait and traps to be ready for when Asian Hornets arrive in our area.

Any member wanting a supply of Trappit or a trap please contact your nearest committee member to make arrangements for collection. Both are being issued to members without charge.

Anyone wishing to make a contribution towards the costs is welcome to make an online payment to the club's account in the normal way (or contact me for details of how to).

Keith Masters

Training Apiary:



*Sunday 14th April, our first inspection.
Photo: Jacky Delooze*

The few days preceding our first inspection had been very pleasant with extended periods of dry weather.

All four colonies had brood in all stages, with the poly hive particularly busy. There will be plenty of things to do in the next session, but it was good to get back into the hives for the first time this year.

Robert produced a delicious lemon drizzle cake to stand next to the chocolate brownies.

We are looking forward to the next session between 10.00 am and 12.00 pm on Sunday **28th April** (and every other Sunday throughout the active season) when we have some new beekeepers coming along to see how it all works.

The site is at Crockham Hill, and the exact location is not widely broadcast for security reasons. If you aren't sure where it is, please ask me. Please contact me if you are new to Westerham Beekeepers and you'd like to come. All are welcome and we look forward to seeing you there!

Jacky Delooze

East Grinstead Beekeepers Talk:

Westerham Beekeepers were invited to attend a talk at East Grinstead Beekeepers on 21st February 2024 by Tom Bickerdike, a Southeast bee inspector for the National Bee Unit (NBU).

The NBU still considers asian hornet incursion in the UK to be at a manageable stage and their target is “eradication”, rather than “containment”.

Tom gave a very good description of the “Track and Trace” approach, which we will have an opportunity to practice with Peter Cobley in May.

He talked highly about Dover Beekeepers and their AH coordination. Dover worked hard to find AH locations for the NBU and helped with the track and trace. Dover had grid mapped their area, with each member taking responsibility for a 1km square on the map. Each member put in a test trap to check for AH. This complemented the NBU's own survey system; between them they found and dealt with many nests.

Hornet spring traps and when to set them was explained as was the life cycle of the hornet emphasising the need to catch the queens at the beginning of the life cycle, nipping them in the bud.

Tom shared some useful data about queen trapping and nest numbers in Jersey and Guernsey. Jersey did not implement spring trapping in the early years, but Guernsey did. While there are doubtless other factors at play, the numbers do tell a compelling story about the effectiveness of spring trapping:

Date	Jersey		Guernsey	
	Queens	Nests	Queens	Nests
2016	2			
2017		13		2
2018		53	3	8
2019	Limited trapping	83	10	3
2020	42	38	3	0
2021	101	63	10	5
2022	55	174	9	4
2023	476	335	37	19

Chart: NBU

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Tom was more optimistic than we expected and seemed confident that they'd dealt with all last year's nests. He cited the sharp drop in reports over the autumn when he'd have expected a continuous stream of sightings as nests became exposed and new queens were released. While there's no doubt that we will continue to see Asian Hornets arrive, he thinks that we can be more like Guernsey than Jersey and stay on top of the situation with the right measures in place.

This was a very optimistic talk and it's good to know that we can rely on the NBU to try to keep the spread under control.

Talk Reports:

Mead Making 29th February:

Celia & David Rudland of East Surrey Bees delivered a fascinating insight into simple methods of Mead Making. David made it all sound very easy, though emphasising the need for patience.

We learned that mead is the oldest alcoholic drink in the world, dating back many centuries BC.

There is no rushing the process and the finished product improves with time. We were a little stunned by the suggestion that his best mead had matured for 7 years!

Mead classifications are the same as for wine - sweet, medium sweet and dry; and it is possible (though harder) to make sparkling mead. Fruit can be added to vary the flavour and colour of mead (melomel). We also learned that mead can't be sold without a personal alcohol license and a premises license.

The evening was very enjoyable and relaxed with both David and Celia happy to answer questions throughout. We will be on the lookout for demijohns to give it a go in the coming year.

Karinne and John Marshall

Twelve Months of Forage 27th March:



Andy Barnes-Willis, landscape gardener and beekeeper, came to talk us through a year of forage – what our bees will be looking out for and when.

Like many beekeepers, Andy first got into beekeeping almost by accident. Taking on the job of looking after a five-acre garden in south Lincolnshire over 30 years ago, he discovered at the eleventh hour that the orchard contained ten beehives, the care of which would be his responsibility. He'd never even seen inside a beehive before. A very steep learning curve ensued.

Combining his passion for plants with keeping bees, Andy has acquired an enviable knowledge of when plants provide pollen and nectar and how the weather conditions can affect the yield. Sunflowers, for example, need good weather, 27 degrees C and above, to produce a good amount of nectar. Hazel (only provides pollen as no nectar is secreted), requires calm still mild weather.

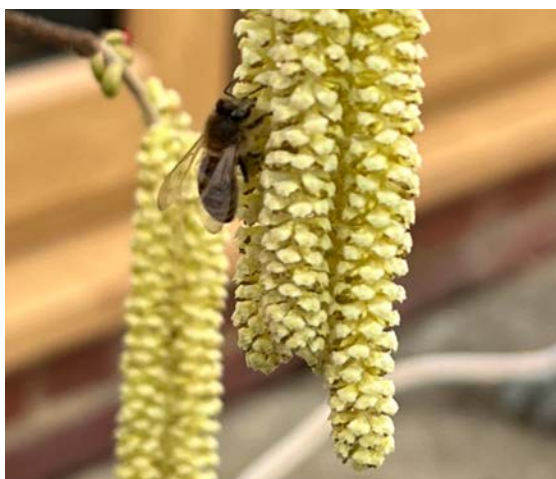
Most of our bees probably forage on many different sources, but it was fascinating to hear of the different honeys produced even if the bees forage on only one particular plant.

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Sunflower - Photo: Liz Peck

Many of us know that honey from oil seed rape sets very quickly, but did you know that raspberry honey tastes of, well, raspberries?



Hazel – Photo: Liz Peck

One of the joys of beekeeping is watching the workers returning to the hive laden with pollen. We can identify the plants our bees have been visiting not only by noting the size and colour of the load but also if the bee's body is dusted with pollen. Returning to the hive with a white stripe of pollen down their backs? Your bees have been at the Himalayan balsam.

And I can feel particularly smug as Andy identified winter flowering [shrubby honeysuckle](#) as the best shrub for the beekeeper's garden – and mine has been flowering its socks off for months!

Liz Peck

Microscopes & More Books:

The association has two microscopes that are available for members to borrow. If you'd like to borrow one, please contact me.

In addition, I've been gifted a collection of bee books that I can make available to members to borrow. Here are a few of the titles:

Mating in Miniature - Bernard Mobus
A Manual of Beekeeping- EB Wedmore
Bumblebees- DV Alford
The Wisdom of the Hive - Thomas D Seeley
Breeding the Honeybee - Brother Adam
Honey Identification- Rex Sawyer
Contemporary Queen Rearing- Harry Laidlaw
Queen Rearing - Laidlaw & Eckert
The Biology of the Honeybee - Mark Winston
Keeping Honeybees- Judy Urquhart
Garden Plants Valuable to Bees-
The Beekeepers Encyclopaedia- Alexander Deans
The Mind of the Bees- Julien Francon
The Behaviour of Bees- Wadey
A Colour Guide to Pollen Loads of the Honeybee- William Kirk
Guide to Bees & Honey - Ted Hooper

Do let me know if you like to borrow any.

Jacky Delooze

and don't forget our library:

We have a small stock of books that members can borrow.

There are some reference publications for beginners plus, some older books that are interesting for historical reference.

The library is available to browse at the winter meetings, where books can be signed out or returned. For any other enquiries please contact us, the Librarians.

Andrew Smith & Sue Bradshaw-Smith

Spring shows: *Asian hornets, varroa, native bees and a book launch.*

Twice in recent weeks I got in the car and headed up multiple motorways to Shropshire to the two big spring beekeeping events held each year. It's a long way to travel from our club area, so maybe this will help you decide whether you should make the trips next year!

First up was [The Beekeeping Show](#) at The Telford International Centre at the end of February. This one is foremost a trade show, and the trade area is by far the biggest I have come across at the major shows. All the big suppliers are there, from the omnipresent Thorne, to fast catching up Abelo, to Maisemore, Paynes, BJ Sherriff and many, many more. The range of equipment on show was vast, and it was fascinating to see the end-to-end automated production lines that the big commercial operations use. No uncapping tools or manual spinning for them!



Photo: The Bee Keeping Show

There was a focus on Asian Hornet monitoring and hive protection, but actually I didn't see anything new beyond the kit that our illustrious committee have already circulated, and I kept my wallet in my pocket bar buying a Gard'Apis at the show discount price. There was a series of presentations on the side (anyone who likes spotting famous - or infamous? - beekeepers would have seen Laurence Edwards of Black Mountain Honey MC'ing the proceedings) aimed mainly at the beginner.

Should you go? If you need a large amount of new kit or you want to upgrade some of your processing tools, then this is the show for you. You can pre-order with the show discount and pick up round the back of the centre. Early years beekeepers will enjoy the presentations and you can just jump in and out without booking.

Next up was, for me, the main event - the [BBKA Spring Convention](#) at Harper Adams University (also near Telford) in early April, this time marking the Association's 150th year with a free hive tool for all attendees. This is first and foremost about education and knowledge sharing, with lectures, seminars and workshops across three days. There is a trade show on one of the days, and it's a massive opportunity to meet beekeepers from across the UK, Ireland and Europe with dinners on two evenings, a speakers' corner and stands away from the main trade area for associations, conservation groups and charities.



Photo: The BBKA Spring Convention

There is something for everyone here as it caters for all experience levels and the calibre of speaker is of the highest level.

The main topics I focused on this year were the latest research and debate on the importance of near-native, locally adapted

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bees and halting imports, the latest research on varroa resistance, and queen breeding. It was good to catch up with other club members - The Marshalls were there and attended lots of lectures so go ahead and pick their brains!

I got the opportunity to spend a couple of hours manning the [Bibba](#) stand as well as attending lectures and presentations, and met so many interesting beekeepers, scientists and conservationists. My mind is bursting with new ideas and I will be trying out some of the techniques and suggestions I garnered from some very experienced beekeepers. I'll also be putting the latest research and knowledge into our new breeding apiary for near-native, locally-adapted and treatment free bees.

He will not thank me for this, but of course another highlight of this year's spring convention was the launch of the new book *The Honey Bee Solution to Varroa* by our own Chair and Education Officer! Get your copy [here](#). Just don't ask him to sign it! Steve was a speaker at the event too of course, and I hope will share some of his thoughts from the event as he and his [team](#) were out educating and engaging. Our club is certainly getting known in the wider beekeeping community!



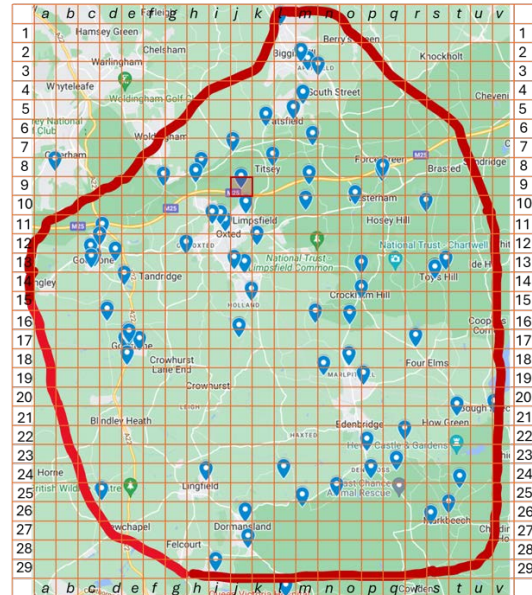
Photo: The BBKA Spring Convention

Should you go? Yes, yes, yes at least once in your beekeeping career. It's a shame the booking system for it is so antiquated and difficult but get past that and get in fast and you won't regret making the trip.

Steve McGrath

Asian Hornet Update:

We now have 85 traps placed out for Asian Hornet queens (see map) with good coverage of our area. Nobody has reported catching one yet.



Some members attended a talk at East Grinstead Beekeepers Association about Asian Hornets and, as a result, there has been more contact with this neighbouring group which we hope will be beneficial. See page 5.

The Outreach Officer at BBKA has been providing publicity material in the form of Facebook posts, press releases etc, which have been circulated to members, with a request to post them in their local village social media.

Several articles about AH have been published in local magazines by Alban Brindle (Godstone area), Sue Bradshaw-Mith and Andrew Smith (Oxsted area) and Topsy Rudd and Annie Robinson (Dormansland and Lingfield area). Copies of these can be provided for submission to non-beekeeping to local magazines.

On the 20th and 21st of March the National Bee Unit received credible reports of lone Asian hornets. The first was in Preston, Lancashire at a

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warehouse with regular trucks arriving from France. A bee inspector attended, set traps and is monitoring the location with support from the local beekeeper.

The second credible report was a dead Asian hornet found in Romford, East London. The specimen was collected by an NBU inspector and sent to the lab at Fera Science Ltd for official confirmation.

Please contact a member of the committee if you need help sourcing or setting a trap for AH queens as they are more likely to be out and about now, in the warmer weather.

Topsy Rudd

Fermented garlic:

This simple Hungarian recipe is said to be efficacious for sore throats and as a pick me up. Originally made using 40 garlic cloves and a large piece of ginger root in 1lb honey all in a large jar, it has been described as powerful and even tummy burning.

Method:

Take a glass jar (4oz/120gm) with lid
Half fill with runny honey
Thinly slice one piece of fresh root ginger and 5 garlic cloves and stir into the honey
Add fresh rosemary and thyme if desired

Cover with lid, invert and gently agitate every two days for a month after which it can be used in whatever way you choose.



Photo: Mark Edwards

The honey's high acidity should deal with any bacteria but, if in doubt, discard it.

Mark Edwards

Honey Madeleines:



Photo: Mark Edwards

Worthy of [Marcel Proust](#)'s attention, these honey madeleines are a delight for the senses. I once worked as the senior sous chef where the head chef had come across from France.



Photo: Mark Edwards

Picture a frenetic kitchen in a smart Bath, Michelin starred, Hotel restaurant. The pastry chef would melt the beeswax for the moulds just before service commenced and then set about baking, so that the madeleines were fresh for the after-meal coffee. But, sometimes, the melting process would cause the wax to catch fire. I recommend a more cautious approach – see below.

Recipe - Makes 15-18. I use two mould sizes - one small mould for a petit size and one twice the size, more suitable for a morning coffee.

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First make the batter then chill in the fridge.

Ingredients:

75 g unrefined golden caster sugar
75 g runny honey
1 organic lemon
2 eggs
125 g plain flour
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp vanilla paste

Method:

1. Wash and finely zest the lemon.
2. Mix the zest with the sugar and stir to release all the oils.
3. Make a well in centre of the sugar and add the runny honey.
4. Whisk the eggs into the sugar & honey mix (using an electric whisk is preferred).
5. Add the vanilla paste and continue whisking to produce a creamy batter.
6. Sieve the flour and baking powder into the mixture and whisk until combined.
7. Chill the mixture in the fridge and pre heat the oven to 200C
8. Grease or wax the moulds (see below).
9. When the mixture has chilled, and the oven is up to temperature spoon the mixture into the moulds - add just enough to almost fill the moulds - 1 tsp per small mould and 2 tsp for the large.
10. Cook until golden brown – approximately 12 mins for a large mould and 8 mins for a smaller mould.
11. While baking, squeeze the juice of the lemon and add 2 tsp of honey and 20 gm of butter and gently combine over a gentle heat.
12. Once removed from the oven allow the madeleines to cool for a minute, then brush the tops with the glaze.

There are many possible variations: dust ground nuts onto the glaze, or ground

almonds in the mix, or cinnamon in the mix or to dust.

Ideally, eat freshly baked.

The moulds I use are silicone or you can use non-stick metal moulds. You can 'grease' the moulds with your own wax to promote flavour and help seal in the freshness. I melt 100gm of wax in a bowl over hot water with 1 tbsp of oil, stirred to blend, which makes it easier to grease the moulds.



Photo: Mark Edwards

If you have treatment free virgin comb, this can be melted in a sieve to collect any unwanted detritus.



Photo: Mark Edwards

Mark Edwards

In My Apiary:

Boxes bursting with bees!

After one of the warmest, but wettest, UK winters on record, I was very happy to get to the end of March with all my colonies making it through. I was looking forward to doing that first quick inspection and seeing what had been happening inside for the past six months. And it rained, and rained, and the wind blew, and the temperatures stayed mild during the night but cold during the day, and I just couldn't get inside the hives.



Photo: Steve McGrath

I knew they were doing well because during the few sunny hours we had, they were busy as anything with huge volumes of pollen arriving back at the hive entrances. I only found my opportunity in early April and prised apart the brood and super to have a look at a couple of frames and put the excluder back in. And wow, I was surprised to see how advanced they were. All of them are building very strongly very early in the season, but one colony in particular was bursting with bees! On any sunny day, they're all over the front of the hive with bees back and forth as though it was May or June!

Which of course worries me a little - what if they're tempted to swarm early! I can't even get in to do a more detailed

inspection and see if preparations are already under way. I saw drone brood, and I have heard of some early swarms elsewhere. I don't want this to happen to mine before I can do a split.



Photo: Steve McGrath

So, I'm now preparing to give them more space and try and delay any thoughts of swarming. I don't want to move them to brood-and-a-half, and so here's what I'm going to try:

When we get another nice day (or morning even), I will check the colony and if there are no queen cells already, I will add another brood box above the queen excluder. I will move several frames with brood up into the new box and backfill with new frames with foundation, leaving the queen with some frames with brood and space to lay. A load of the nurse bees should move up to tend the brood above the excluder while more bees get to work drawing the frames with new foundation. They now have double the space and more work to do, hopefully delaying the urge to swarm until I feel comfortable doing a split (when there are sexually mature drones across the apiary and some much nicer weather!). I'll let you know how it goes in practice!

Steve McGrath

About Westerham Beekeepers:

Westerham Beekeepers is a branch of the Kent Beekeepers Association. Our aim is to promote the craft of beekeeping by helping to educate both beekeepers and the public. While we are mostly practising amateur beekeepers, membership is open to interested members of the public. We meet during the winter months in Westerham, usually for lectures by visiting specialists and our own members. During the active beekeeping season, we meet for demonstrations by experienced beekeepers in our members' apiaries.

Website: <https://westerham.kbka.org.uk>

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for winter talks & summer visits
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To join the Westerham
Beekeepers' WhatsApp group,
please contact Mark Waddington



To join the Training Apiary's
Facebook group, please contact
Jacky Delooze

Committee Members:

Steve Riley - Chairman & Education
Officer

Topsy Rudd – Branch Secretary

Keith Masters - Treasurer

Jacky Delooze - Training Apiary Manager

Mark Waddington - Events Programme

Robert Ambroziak - Membership
Secretary

Robert Dudgeon - Swarm Co-ordinator &
Branch representative on KBKA Council

James Cash - Branch representative on
KBKA Council

Advice for Beginners & FAQs:

[Advice for Beginners & FAQs on our
website](#)

Swarm Reporting:

Please contact our swarm co-ordinator,
Robert Dudgeon on 01732 864486, Topsy
Rudd on 07855 300352 or the nearest
contact from the [BBKA website](#) if neither
Robert nor Topsy are available.

Last Word: Eke – originally an
extension to a skep - a ring of twisted
straw, and now used for any extension to
a hive providing temporary additional
space. This space may be:

- an extension for a brood box
- to allow feed above brood frames
- to position varroa treatment
- a travel screen to increase ventilation
during transport
- a new entrance when performing a
Bailey Comb Change
- space for a colony “shut in” during
farmland pesticide spray treatment

The word has the same entomology as the
phrase “to eke out” meaning *to supplement
or make something go further*.