

WEYBRIDGE DIVISION ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2019

Financial The Weybridge division remains in a healthy financial situation.

Membership The Weybridge division has 133 members during 2019. This is a decrease of 7 on the previous year, mainly through the decrease in Associate members.

Committee The full committee met on four occasions during the year.

Bee health European foul brood was detected in one apiary in the Weybridge division area in 2019. A Nosema clinic held on 2 April was not well attended this year. The division's microscope, which can be linked to a computer screen, makes viewing the samples simple.

Bee swarms The BBKA swarm website page is being used as the first point of contact. This directs callers to one of several local swarm collectors. Household holders with swarms are being invited to make a no-obligation donation to the Weybridge division.

Apiaries The Weybridge division has its longstanding apiary site for members at Rowtown. Paul Bunclark generously allowed his apiary near Rowtown was used as the division's teaching apiary.

New Teaching Apiary and Education Centre/Clubhouse project Following the disappointment of not being able to proceed with the Hersham property that had looked so promising in 2018, Weybridge division has continued to look at other possibilities. Some have not been viable but we continue to have promising leads.

Honey Yields 2019 honey yields have been variable, but most members seem to have had yields that were average or above average. The long hot summer helped bee foraging, despite the drought.

Honey Shows Weybridge members were among the prize winners at the 2019 Surrey County Show in May and the National Honey Show in October, with a variety of firsts, seconds and thirds in the Open and Surrey classes. Weybridge members at the Surrey County Show had their best result in many years, being only 5 points behind the overall winner, Guildford. Geoff and Marion Cooper won the Dewey Cake Cup in the Honey Date Cake class in the Confectionery classes at the National. Geoff Cooper, who edits the Weybridge monthly newsletter, won third prize in the Branch Newsletter class at the National Honey Show. At both shows, Weybridge members helped man the information stands and other stalls.

Asian Hornet Action Team

The Weybridge division held an Asian hornet information meeting on 6 Feb that was attended by beekeepers from other Surrey divisions. Information was also given out at three street market events in Weybridge and at a Surrey Wildlife Trust event in Guildford, as well as at the Surrey County Show and National Honey Show. Talks given to garden clubs, wildlife groups etc have also provided opportunities to promote Asian hornet awareness. In late summer Weybridge division Asian hornet posters were put up within the division's area. These posters give local contact phone numbers to try and relieve the pressure on the NNSS caused by thousands of well-meaning but false reports of Asian hornet sightings being made by the public.

Education Nineteen people attended the winter theory course for new beekeepers and the summer practical course. By the end of the year a majority of the beginners had acquired their own bees. The principal lecturer for the theory course for new beekeepers is Andrew Halstead.

Jane Hunter took and passed the Basic Assessment Certificate (credit). Edwina Wardle passed Module 6: Honey Bee Behaviour (Credit), Module 8: Honey Bee Management and History (Distinction), Advanced Theory (Distinction) and Jonathan Kernan passed Module 1: Honey Bee Management.

Web Site The Weybridge division's website is being revamped and will shortly be changing its address from www.weybridgebeekeepers.weebly.com to www.weybridgebeekeepers.org

Equipment Thanks to a grant from Elmbridge Borough Council, Weybridge division has been able to purchase a variety of items to support the teaching of beekeeping and education of the wider public. The new equipment includes educational material such as model WBC and National hives, a brood box containing frames fitted with photographs, posters and 3-d display photographs. We have also been able to purchase a gazebo, tables, display boards and a digital projector.

Events The following events took place in 2019 –

- 22 Jan Members short talks evening
- 6 Feb Asian hornet meeting – Andrew Halstead
- 13 March Fly talk – Erica McAlister (Natural History Museum)
- 18 March Bee disease evening – David Rudland (East Surrey Bees)
- 2 April Nosema clinic
- 28 April Garden apiary meeting Michael Main – false swarm procedure, Bailey comb change
- 26 May Garden apiary meeting David Nield – bee disease check with Jonathon Brookhouse
- 27 May Surrey Honey Show at the Surrey County Show, Guildford
- 2 June Asian hornet/beekeeping information stand at Surrey Wildlife Trust event, Guildford
- 8 June Garden apiary meeting Aslam Aziz – preparing for the summer flow
- 15 June Honey/bee stall at Weybridge Artisan Food Fair
- 16 July Garden apiary meeting Geoff and Marion Cooper – what not to do!
- 4 August Ride Surrey Weybridge Fair honey/bee stall
- 14 and 18 August Taster days for new beekeepers
- 1 Sept Talk on honey and bees at Woking Food and Drink Festival – Andrew Halstead
- 15 Sept Garden apiary meeting at Fair Oaks airfield David Parker -preparing for winter and Varroa treatment
- 24-26 Oct National Honey Show
- 10 Nov Weybridge division AGM
- 30 Nov Weybridge Christmas Fair honey/bee stall

Andrew Halstead

Chairman Weybridge Division 2019