



# Stockport Beekeeper

## September 2021

### Stockport Events

**Woodford War Memorial  
Community Centre, Chester  
Road, SK7 1PS**

**Weds 13th October 7.30pm**  
Paul Beardmore - how I got into  
commercial beekeeping

**Sat 13th November 1pm**  
Annual Honey Show

**Weds 8th December 7.30pm**  
Christmas social event

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### Zoom Events

**Weds 8th September**  
Graham Royle - Autumn/ Winter  
preparation

<https://cheshire-bka.co.uk/events/>

### National Honey Show

Sandown Park Racecourse,  
Esher, Surrey, KT10 9AJ on  
**21st - 23rd October**

[www.honeyshow.com](http://www.honeyshow.com)

### From The Chair

**Peter Carefoot**

**Throughout the summer** I receive many emails about swarms of bees. These range from the 2 bumblebees in a garden shed to honey bees coming down the chimney. Of course, there are real swarms but mostly the calls for help are for bumblebees. I try to find out before I call on help to investigate but even then the call can be a false alarm. Like the little old lady with cataracts whose swarm turned out to be 'bumbles'. I believe she made delicious tea and cakes for our swarm collector.

Recently, I received a call from a Stockport member and members of a local Facebook page with concerns about an aged couple with honey bees in their garden shed. The woman was a carer for her infirm husband and had been badly stung getting items from the shed.

One of the Stockport Committee visited within a couple of hours and identified a large wasp nest. The woman had been making internet enquiries for pest removal and received a quote of £1500 deposit and £4000 to remove the bees. Fortunately, she realised this was a scam but this demonstrates how scammers detect and prey on vulnerable elderly people. The woman was

directed to a local and reliable pest controller to rid her of the wasps. So, well done Alan Towse for his prompt and sympathetic action.

**The last apiary meeting** of the year was hosted by Paul and Clare Beardmore and their family at the Happy Valley Honey Company. Despite the torrential rain, more than 30 members turned out for what was a very successful day. With plenty of shelter available in his shop and an excellent buffet to cheer us all, Paul answered questions and members were able to mingle and chat; such a good antidote to lockdown. When the rain eased Paul demonstrated various varroa control methods on his colonies and answered many more questions. Afterwards, some of us remained chatting and clearing up the remains of the buffet. Members were able to buy and take away beekeeping supplies with tubs of bee syrup and fondant proving very popular. Thank you Paul for a very informative day.

**I'm looking forward** to Graham Royle's talk for our next branch meeting on September 8. Graham will talk on Zoom and answer questions about preparing for winter. I hope to see you there.

**Peter Carefoot**

## From The Apiary - Peter Carefoot

My optimism in the August newsletter about the promising weather forecast for August was dashed by a month that started wet and ended grey and cool, with little sunshine. Bees have been reluctant to venture on such cool days, and there have been only two or three days when first fliers have filled the air. The bees are grumpy and need to be busy harvesting and processing honey. At the church, rosebay willowherb is still in flower but nearly done, and the balsam is abundant. A week or two of warm sunshine would soon fill the supers. There is plenty of brood, but the supers are lighter than at the end of July, which makes me think the bees are eating more than they are bringing in. So, I have a dilemma, to extract now or wait a week or two hoping for a top-up from the balsam. I'm not too concerned about varroa treatment since I use oxalic acid vapourisation, which is not reliant on warm weather.

There is much to do at the church. S. is tackling the wild and 'natural' areas which need their September cut. Some parishioners are unhappy about these wild areas and want the areas more manicured, especially around the old gravestones. A compromise has been reached, but there is much to do before winter. One of the chickens was euthanased because of arthritis. We are all left feeling sad, but better this than being harassed by Mr Fox or a wandering

dog. We have not seen the hare for several weeks. I hope it reappears soon. It is a good feeling having it around.

On the farm, the ducklings are as big as their mum and are wandering around with the other fowl. They run to mum when I appear in my bee suit, making an alarming racket. I shook out a failed, drone laying nuc between two strong colonies and overnight the bees had merged with no signs of stragglers. The lovely dark queen did not make it back from mating. I was so disappointed.

It has been a poor year for raising queens from swarm splits. I remove queens to a nuc when swarm cells appear and have an average success rate of 75% with new queens in the brood box. Of the four attempts to raise queens this year, only one has been successful, and that was in the early sunny weather. The other three queens all emerged but failed. Subsequent test frames did not produce emergency cells. So, two queenless have been combined with queenright colonies and the old queens reinstated in others. Usually, I have new queens over the winter, keeping the older queens as spares to give away in spring. I must prepare carefully this autumn with no contingency if colonies fail. Perhaps I will buy in some new genes from a reliable local beekeeper. Food for thought over the winter.

## Winter Bees - Steve Donohoe

The bees that you have in your hives right now will probably not be around for much longer. They are 'summer bees' foraging away collecting stores for the winter to come. The lifespan of such bees is somewhere around six weeks, although it depends on how much foraging they do. It's the flying back and forth, over and over again, which ages the bees leading to their short lives.

Over the next few weeks - up until late October in my hives by my estimation - queens will lay what will become 'winter bees'. These bees are different; they weigh more and live much longer. Winter bees have a different job to summer bees. They fly much less, for

a start. Their bodies contain greater stores of nutrients, including vitellogenin, which can be used to feed brood in early spring even without the presence of fresh pollen. If you have plenty of healthy winter bees, you are well on the way to having bees that survive winter and prosper next season. Obviously they need adequate stores and a good queen too.

Anyway, you need to look after your winter bees. The brood that becomes winter bees is laid from now on. If you have high levels of varroa those poor larvae will suffer, and the survival of the colony is in doubt.

Make sure you treat for varroa!



### Who's on the Committee?

Peter Carefoot - Chair

Paul Wheeldon - Vice Chair

Roy Brocklehurst - Apiary Manager

David Lilley - Deputy Apiary Manager

Tricia Watkins - Programme and Events Manager

Pat Booth - Honey Show Manager

Colin Booth

Alan Towse - Education Secretary

Brian Gee

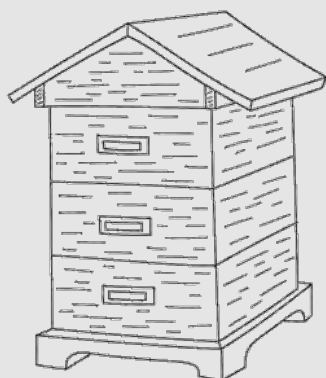
Liz Sparkes

Alistair Taylor - Treasurer

Steve Donohoe - Secretary

### Next Committee Meeting

Thursday 7th October at 7.15pm  
Woodbank Meeting Room  
(Committee members only)



## Odds and Ends

### \*\*Local Honey For Sale\*\*

As secretary I get many requests for local honey. I respond with a list of beekeepers who have asked for their details to be circulated. **If you want to be added to the list of honey sellers** please email your contact details to The Secretary  
[secretary@stockportbeekeepers.co.uk](mailto:secretary@stockportbeekeepers.co.uk)

### Branch Honey Extractor

The Branch honey extractor is available for hire at a cost of **£1 per day** or part day. It is available to be collected from and returned to my home in Glossop. The address will be given at the time of booking. Contact **Peter Carefoot** on 01457 238664 or

[chairman@stockportbeekeepers.co.uk](mailto:chairman@stockportbeekeepers.co.uk)



*It's time to extract that delicious honey!*

### Contact Details

If you want to contact the secretary (Steve Donohoe) the new email address is:

[secretary@stockportbeekeepers.co.uk](mailto:secretary@stockportbeekeepers.co.uk)

Feel free to send in any articles for the newsletter, snippets of news or events.

### Stockport Honey Show

The annual honey show will be held at Woodford War Memorial Community Centre, Chester Road, Woodford, SK7 1PS on Saturday 13th November. Staging will be from 1pm and judging will start at 2pm. The honey judge is Mr Steve Guest and the cake judge is Mrs J Barlow. The entry fee is just £1, and in the majority of classes the honey should be in 454g squat jars.



*The honey show needs your honey*

It would be great to see new faces having a go at showing their produce, and the best place to find out more is by attending Pat's talk. There is a specific category for novices including one where your honey is presented in a black jar and is judged more on taste/aroma than appearance.

### Speaker Search

Our friends at Hayfield WI have advised they had a very informative talk a couple of years ago from one of your members (Paul), who after his talk sold a variety of products from the hives.

We are currently putting our 2022 programme together and wondered if anyone would be interested/available in talking to us at our March meeting which would be on the 3rd at 7.30pm. This is held at Spring bank arts centre in New Mills.

If someone is available please let me know if there is a set free for the talk, donation etc.

I look forward to hearing from you

Karen  
On behalf of New Mills WI

(Contact the secretary if interested)

### Equipment For Sale



Table top extractor from Thornes (National/WBC)

Legs for the extractor

**Extractor + Stand: £200**

x16 Apidea Mating Nucs (Paynes)



Used for three or four seasons. Need a clean. (some have fondant in the feeding chamber) The bees have nibbled around the entrances on some - hives are in still in good working order. X6 do not have queen excluder plates for the entrances but a these are generally not used. Also have spare frames available.

**£10 each**  
**Job lot for £140**

**Contact:**  
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email: [david.f.porter@outlook.com](mailto:david.f.porter@outlook.com)