



Stockport Beekeeper

October 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

Zoom Events

Tues 7th December 7.30pm
Dr Alexandra Sapoznik -
Beekeeping in the Middle Ages

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

National Honey Show

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

www.honeyshow.com

From The Chair

Peter Carefoot

Membership of Stockport

Beekeepers now stands at 240. During 2021, 43 new members have joined, and receive the benefits of BBKA and Cheshire magazines, as well as Stockport newsletters and various levels of support through apiary meetings and email and phone correspondence. This increase is good news and I will be exploring ways to involve the wider membership in branch activities.

The region's honey crop

appears to be above average for this year, with many members reporting their best ever season. There has been strong and constant use of the branch honey extractor since the end of August and it is booked out until the middle of October.

At Woodbank Apiary, Alan and David staged an extraction night for this year's beginners to experience the delights of honey extraction. The yield is 200 lbs against the 232lbs last year. There has been more activity in the apiary this year with the Practical Course and more members attending the weekly training nights. Roy is of the opinion that this interruption affects honey production. However, the bees are generally in good shape for all that. Empty supers have been

added to colonies for cleaning and varroa treatment has started. There was a European Foul Brood scare at the apiary at the end of September. Roy and Alan destroyed the small colony and sent samples away for analysis. The negative result was a relief to all. A salient reminder that beekeepers should not let up on the health checks every time the brood is opened. Speaking of bee health, do not forget to treat varroa. If you need some advice contact one of the Committee and we will try to help.

Now that most honey is extracted, it is time to consider entering the Honey Show on November 13. As well as matching your honey and other hive produce against colleagues, there is the opportunity to discuss the highs and the lows of the season with experienced beekeepers.

With the main season over, my ageing back can take a rest and it is time to tackle the pile of beekeeping books and magazines and catch up on my reading. The branch library will be available at the next meeting at Woodford Memorial Hall on October 13.

Peter Carefoot



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

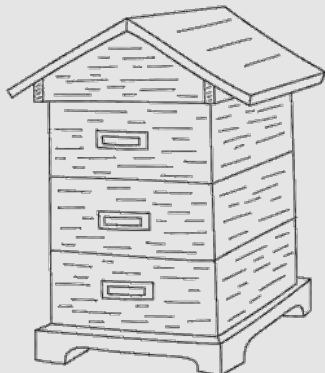
Liz Sparkes

Alistair Taylor - Treasurer

Steve Donohoe - Secretary

Next Committee Meeting

Thursday 13th January 2022 at
7.15pm
Woodbank Meeting Room
(Committee members only)



From The Apiary - Peter Carefoot

I was recently on holiday in Cornwall and was quite relaxed apart from my concerns about my queenless colony back home. While clearing three supers, I checked the brood box to find no brood or eggs, just frames of part sealed nectar. With no sign of the queen and fearing the worst, I left on one part-filled super with two frames of foundation. I also started to feed syrup with high hopes fresh comb would stimulate a possible queen to begin laying eggs.

When I returned and opened up the hive, there were two frames of eggs, larvae and sealed worker brood. There was no sign of the queen, but she did have the run of two boxes. I did not waste any time looking for her as the bees became progressively angry in the cool damp.

Anyway, I was a happy beekeeper. It is a big colony, and if the queen can get her winter bees, there is a good chance of survival. A quick check today showed the bees bringing in lots of ivy pollen with the remnants of the balsam.

There are three female pheasants at the church helping the chickens with

their feed and pecking about under the hives. I like to see them, as does my little Majorcan terrier. He is on the leash all the time, and I dare not let him loose. He is a lovely dog, but his killer instincts are well embedded.

The bees have been in the heather again this year, making extraction very messy. The honey will not spin out, so the bees get it back. Next year I will add some non wired foundation and try to make some cut comb.

On the farm, I put back a wet super for the bees to clear. When I checked six days later, the bees had almost filled it again with full frames of sealed honey from the nearby balsam. This queen is from August 2020 and has shown no signs of swarming. Her bees are delightful to check and so productive. I must make some daughters from her next year, a mini project to plan through the winter.

The balsam honey is a bonus. Our family enjoy the lighter flavour better than the heather enriched honey, so we will not sell this honey.

Ethiopian Mead - Sue O'Connor

I'm having a go at making mead. There's a story to it. In January 2020 I made an incredible tour of the ancient sites of Northern Ethiopia. My companion and guide was the Eritrean boy we had fostered. He was brought up in Ethiopia and had told me such wonderful stories about his childhood including honey hunting in his village with other boys. No suits, no tools, just good tree climbing skills and a bunch of burning twigs. All the villagers would gather to eat the honey and some would make a mead called Tej which would be enjoyed at festivals.

One evening we went to a Tej bar where the drink was served in special glass flasks to the music of the masenqo and drum and people danced. I didn't like the drink much but the scent of it was intoxicating and the whole evening unforgettable.

Extracting our honey this week the



beautiful scent put me in mind of my amazing evening in Lalibela. The country is in turmoil now and I think about the friends I made there and the dangers they are facing. I haven't heard from any of them for months. I thought I'd try and make some Tej to remember them by.

Chairman's Objectives 2021-2024

****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

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

Contact Details

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

secretary@stockportbeekeepers.co.uk

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

At the last Stockport Beekeepers' committee meeting, I presented some objectives I wanted to achieve during my tenure as Chair of the Branch. I expect to be in the chair no longer than three years, but this will depend on my acceptability to members. I will give regular progress reports through newsletters or separate communications. I would like any feedback either through the Newsletter or directly to myself.

Develop, implement and maintain an effective communication strategy.

- Completely rebuild the SBKA website.
- Develop an integrated social media presence.
- Develop and maintain effective communications with Cheshire Beekeepers' Committee and other branches.
- Communicate effectively with the Committee and the wider membership.
- Develop strong working relationships with influential Stockport Groups.

Maintain a functional events programme

Working with Tricia Watkins

- Consult with members over event requirements.
- Support the Programme Manager.
- Develop and implement an annual events programme, which meets the education and promotional requirement of the branch.
- Develop an effective programme delivery through either physical meetings or digital alternatives.

Ensure SBKA remains financially sound.

Working with Alistair Taylor

- Ensure timely and accurate annual reporting of financial affairs.
- Ensure the use of branch funds to achieve the purpose and objectives of Stockport Beekeepers.
- Explore opportunities to grow funds through education and promotional programmes.

Develop and maintain an effective Education Programme

Working with Alan Towse

- Ensure an effective annual education programme.
- Maintain the standards of the successful theory and practical Beginners' Course

Ensure the effectiveness of the Committee

Working with Stephen Donohoe

- Ensure an effective and efficient programme of Branch Committee Meetings
- Where necessary, develop a succession plan for essential Committee positions
- Build and support the capacity of Committee activities by getting the wider membership involved in all branch events.

Ensure Health and Safety at all SBKA gatherings

Protect all gatherings of Branch members by robust legislative Health and Safety requirements.