



# WSBKA AGM

**A** REMINDER that this year's **Annual General Meeting** , our 52<sup>nd</sup> , will be on 'Zoom' on **Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> March** starting at 6:30pm.

All members are welcome to attend and the Meeting ID and Passcode can be found below (members' copy only). The Agenda, Minutes of last year's AGM, Report from the Chair and Treasurer's Annual Report can be found at the end of the members' copy of this Newsletter.

**Additional items for the Agenda and nominations for all the Executive Roles and the Accounts Scrutineer should be advised to the secretary no later than 18<sup>th</sup> March.**

## Graham Elliott

Hon. Secretary West Sussex Beekeepers  
[secretary@westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk](mailto:secretary@westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk)

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# WSBKA Annual Bee Market & Auction

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With another very successful Convention behind us we now turn our attention to an equally important event for West Sussex Beekeepers and its members.

Our **49<sup>th</sup> Bee Market & Auction** will be held on **Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> April**. The venue is again Chichester College's Brinsbury Campus in Pulborough.

Full details, Guidance Notes and an Entry Form for registering Lots for sale is now on the website:

[www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk/auction.html](http://www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk/auction.html)

We have already accepted the first 170 Lots so do not delay in registering items for sale as we will close when 300 Lots have been recorded. Remember, the equipment must be clean and in a saleable condition. Any bees offered for sale must have been inspected by the Regional or Seasonal Bee Inspector between 12<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> April.



Est. 1975

**If you can offer some time on the day please contact Ben Hewson by email: [ben@benhewson.com](mailto:ben@benhewson.com) or me. It's never too early to register your interest and we will do our very best to give you a role that suits you, be it inside or outside, and at a time that that is convenient. We promise you an enjoyable and interesting day benefiting members, non-members and your Association.**

## *Graham*

[secretary@westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk](mailto:secretary@westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk)

## The Auction's Plant Stall

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A regular and very popular addition to the Annual Bee Market & Auction is the **Plant Stall** run for many years by Sue Cooper.

This always makes a significant financial contribution to the Association's coffers as well as being greatly appreciated by all visitors to the Brinsbury Campus.

Sue is seeking donations to the **Stall** this year as she no longer runs her own market garden and is seeking a variety of plants. House and Garden Plants as well as tomato, cucumber, courgette and other vegetables to be grown on during the Spring and Summer would be appreciated.

Sue is also seeking help running the **Stall** throughout the day so if you can spare some time or make a donation to the stall, however small, please contact Sue on email or mobile:

[woodbugs23@gmail.com](mailto:woodbugs23@gmail.com) or 01798 870 461

# WSBKA Convention - Review

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The Convention on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> February was well attended with almost 100 delegates. 71 West Sussex members were joined by beekeepers from as far afield as Southampton, North London and Farnham.

The facilities at Lodge Hill, Pulborough are excellent and the situation at the top of the hill gave spectacular views across West Sussex in all directions. The weather was kind and everything worked well together to make a highly successful day. – all made possible by Christine Stevens and her team of volunteers.

The hall was full of enthusiastic beekeepers enjoying main lectures by an excellent line up of speakers, one joining us from his home in Lockerbie in Scotland. In addition, our delegates enjoyed a varied choice of seminars that took their interest - a good mix of practical and thought-provoking talks, which got everyone into the mood for the coming season.

It was also a great opportunity to catch up and chat with beekeepers from around the County and beyond. Feedback has been very good with many suggestions for the future.

Thanks again to the organisers and also to all participants who made it such an interactive and enjoyable day.



We can already announce the date of **28<sup>th</sup> February 2026** for next year's Convention, so put that date in your diary now to be sure not to miss out. We will again be covering a wide range of topics for all to enjoy.

One of our speakers, Dr Stephen Fleming, is co-editor of *BeeCraft*. Established in 1919, *BeeCraft* is the UK's best-selling and international award-winning monthly beekeeping magazine. It is now easier than ever for beekeeping groups to join the Group Discount Plan and receive magazine subscription discounts, exclusive offers in the *BeeCraft* shop and free magazines for students in beginners' classes. Once Divisions have sign up, members simply email [subscriptions@bee-craft.com](mailto:subscriptions@bee-craft.com) quoting the discount code provided by their Division. Chichester and Wisborough Green have already joined the Plan, but other WSBKA groups can benefit from the offer too.

## WEST SUSSEX BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION



President: **Mrs Christine Stevens**

Chair: **Vacant**

Vice Chair: **Mr Roger Patterson**

Honorary Secretary

**Mr Graham Elliott**

Tel: 07761 349281

[secretary@westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk](mailto:secretary@westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk)

Honorary Treasurer

**Mr Brian Hose**

Tel: 01243 533559

[treasurer@westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk)

Life Vice-Presidents: **Mrs Christine Stevens, Mr Roger Patterson,  
Mr Ray Noakes & Mr Graham Elliott**

**NOTICE** is given to all Members of West Sussex Beekeepers' Association that the **52<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting** will be held online on **Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025**, commencing at 6.30pm. It is hoped that as many Members as possible will participate to support the Association.

**Those members wishing to join the meeting should note that the ID and passcode for the 'Zoom' online meeting will be published in the members' edition of the March County News - or contact the Secretary for details.**

### **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of the 51<sup>st</sup> AGM, held via 'Zoom' on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Annual Report from the Chair
5. Election of Officers. All officers are prepared to stand for re-election with the exception of Mrs Christine Stevens who has reached the end of her two-year term of office as President.

### **Present Holders:**

President – **Mrs Christine Stevens** (retiring)

Chair – Vacant

Vice Chair – **Mr Roger Patterson**

Treasurer – **Mr Brian Hose**

Secretary – **Mr Graham Elliott**

6. To appoint the Accounts Scrutineer for 2025
7. Any Other Business (as notified to the Secretary)

# BIBBA Training Course

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A REMINDER of this month's BIBBA event.

**23<sup>rd</sup> March 'The Early Years'. Pulborough Village Hall, Swan View, Pulborough, RH20 2BF**



The course, sponsored by West Sussex Beekeepers, will support beekeepers to enhance their skills and knowledge. Ideal for beekeepers looking for the next stage after the local theory and practical course, or for those wanting a refresh. The two tutors are practical beekeepers who will pass on the experiences gleaned from many years in the craft. Karl Colyer is from Cheshire and will join Roger Patterson.

## Programme for the day:-

9:00 Registration

9:25 Introduction and welcome

9:30-10:15 **Roger Patterson:** *'Learn the basics'*

10:15 – 10:30 Break

10:30 – 11:15 **Karl Colyer:** *'Things I Wish I'd Known Earlier'*

11:15 – 11:30 Break

11:30 – 12:30 **Roger Patterson:** *'Queen cells: Their recognition and uses'*

12:30 – 1:15 Lunch (bring your own and refreshments)

1:15 – 2:15 **Karl Colyer:** *'Balancing your beekeeping with your other commitments'*

2:15 - 2:30 Break

2:30 – 3:30 **Roger Patterson:** *'Observation: Interpret what you see'*

3:30 General discussion and close

Further details, speakers' profiles and to book your place for just £12:  
<https://bibba.com/early-years-events/>

## County Success

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Further to the results highlighted in last month's newsletter Alan Aldridge (Chichester) has succeeded in passing the Microscopy Certificate.

Well done Alan.

## Chat from the Chair

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**N**ow we are approaching the active season, there is plenty for beekeepers to do. During dry weather, apiaries can be tidied up, with vegetation cut back to make it easier handling colonies. Get hive parts cleaned up ready for spring cleaning colonies and supers ready for putting on the hives, hopefully in time, as bees can bring in a surprising amount of forage, both nectar and pollen, in a few days of warm weather. This can quickly crowd queens out, so retarding colonies and probably causing early swarming.

One good early forage source is withy, also known as goat and pussy willow (*Salix caprea*). This strikes easy from cuttings, so just break off a few small twigs, push them into soft ground and they should grow. Take them from several different trees, as they display catkins at different times and they are dioecious, meaning they have male (pollen) and female (nectar) trees. In this way, you can increase the local forage at a good time for bees.

In recent years, there has been a much greater interest in characteristics of bees, with *Varroa* resistance and local adaptability being seen as important. *Varroa* resistance has recently been understood more and is moving apace, but local adaptability has been a long term aim for some beekeepers. If you get the opportunity, I suggest reading up on both and attend any appropriate meetings.

### **Roger**

Vice Chair WSBKA

[roger@pattersonbees.co.uk](mailto:roger@pattersonbees.co.uk)

## Association Discounts

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**BBWear** is again making a discount available to WSBKA members this Spring.

So if you are considering new beekeeping clothing this year the following discount codes are available to use when ordering from their website: [www.bbwear.co.uk](http://www.bbwear.co.uk) until 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025



Polycotton range discount code: **BKAPOLY15**

Ultra range discount code: **BKAULTRA10**

Both codes are case sensitive and are also valid for use with jackets, vests, trousers, gauntlets, replacement hoods and children's bee suits.

**BJ Sherriff** has extended its current discount until 7<sup>th</sup> March. 10% off and free carriage. [www.bjsherriff.com](http://www.bjsherriff.com).



*WSBKA does not endorse suppliers but passes on these discounts for your benefit should you wish to use them for purchasing from their websites. Ed.*

## Yellow-legged Asian Hornet Update

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Hampshire Beekeepers is holding what is becoming an annual Asian Hornet Conference on 1<sup>st</sup> March and have invited representatives from West Sussex Beekeepers to join them in Winchester.

The keynote speaker will be from the NBU who will outline how they see our Asian Hornet Teams working with the government department in the year ahead.



## BBKA Update

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Kirsteen Thorne, BBKA's Outreach Officer, has announced her departure from the Association on 21<sup>st</sup> February. After just a year in the role Kirsteen has done much to raise the public's awareness of the Yellow-legged Asian hornet in England.

At the recent Annual Delegates' Meeting the proposition to increase Capitation Fees was passed by the delegates present. This is the contribution we all make through our membership of our local associations to support the BBKA. The increase is modest - just £2 on Registered Membership subscription taking it to £23 pa, and £1.50 on the Partner Member's subscription taking the annual fee to £15. This will be collected from 1<sup>st</sup> October this year through your Division.

The next in the BBKA series of 'Zoom' talks will be 'Preparing For Exams' with Jenny Morgan on 18<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm. A recording of this talk will be available on YouTube for those unable to watch live.

Zoom link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81233819992?pwd=DYmZxTlMjJpRCLjYjvblxgybQQdSZ.1>

Meeting ID: 812 3381 9992 Passcode: 527929

Future Meeting Dates - 15<sup>th</sup> April: 'Swarms' with Lesley Jacques, and 20<sup>th</sup> May: 'Building a Strong Colony' with Roger Paterson. Further details nearer the time.

## Public Policy exchange Webinar

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Public Policy Exchange will be hosting a [webinar on Protecting Pollinators: How far will new UK bans on neonicotinoids go towards reviving pollinator populations?](#)

This will take place on **Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> May** between **9:30 AM and 1:00 PM**.



Register your place on this Webinar by following the above link, although at £199 it is expensive!

## Des Res for Honey Bees

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A landowner in Watersfield, southwest of Pulborough, is offering a 125 acre organic farm to accommodate a small number of honey bee colonies.

The Besley farmland area benefits from a diverse habitat and a very rich ecosystem with the River Arun running along the entire eastern boundary.

There are no footpaths or bridleways on the farm and potential beekeepers are encouraged to visit to view possible sites.

If you are interested in settling honey bee colonies on the farm contact Janey for further details.



Janey Jameson [jfletcherpublishing@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jfletcherpublishing@hotmail.co.uk)

## Improve Your Handling Skills!

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An opportunity to improve your colony-handling skills. Join the practical *'Honey Bee Handling & Management'* course on 9<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> May.

The venue is Thornes Beekeeping Supplies, Rand, Lincolnshire, LN8 5NJ who are sponsoring this training course.

Tutored by two BBKA past-Presidents, Margaret Murdin NDB and Anne Rowberry MB. Both are well known to WSBKA, Margaret having spoken at our Convention in 2024 and Anne this year. Anne was also our BBKA link trustee for West Sussex. Both are experienced assessors, examiners and tutors at all levels and teach widely across the UK.

Fee for the 3 days is just £75.

For further details contact Anne on email: [annerowberry@gmail.com](mailto:annerowberry@gmail.com)



## Around the Divisions

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All Members are welcome to attend any Divisional meeting, but please advise the organiser if you plan to attend.

### Central Sussex Division



**Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March** - *'Annual General Meeting, Social & Prize Giving'*, 7:30pm at The Millennium Hall, Crawley Road, Roffey, RH12 4DT. Further details of the Division's activities from: [secretary@centralsussexbeekeepers.org.uk](mailto:secretary@centralsussexbeekeepers.org.uk) or the Division's website: <https://centralsussexbeekeepers.org.uk/>

### Chichester Division



**Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March** - *'Annual General Meeting & Projects' Update'* from 7:30pm. Boxgrove Village Hall, The Street, Boxgrove, Chichester, PO18 0EE. Further details of the Division's activities from: Cheryl Barton, [secretary@chichesterbeekeepers.co.uk](mailto:secretary@chichesterbeekeepers.co.uk) or the Division's website: [www.chichesterbeekeepers.co.uk](http://www.chichesterbeekeepers.co.uk).

### Wisborough Green Division

Full details of the Division's activities from: Martina Hendry, [secretary@wgbka.org.uk](mailto:secretary@wgbka.org.uk) or the Division's website: [www.wgbka.org.uk](http://www.wgbka.org.uk). Newsletters may be viewed here: [www.wgbka.org.uk/Newsletters.html](http://www.wgbka.org.uk/Newsletters.html)

### Worthing Division



**Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March** - *'Monthly Meeting'*. The Glebelands Centre, Greystoke Road, Ferring, BN12 5JL from 7:30pm. Full details of the Division's activities on the Division's website: [www.worthing-beekeepers.org](http://www.worthing-beekeepers.org)

*'Share your Division's activities with readers of the County News'*

## ...and Dates for your Diary



**Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> March** - *'West Sussex Beekeepers' Annual General Meeting'*. Full details in this Newsletter.

**Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> April** - *'West Sussex Beekeepers' 49<sup>th</sup> Bee Market & Auction'*. From 8:30am at Chichester College's Brinsbury Campus, Pulborough, RH20 1DL. Details in this Newsletter and at [www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk/auction.html](http://www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk/auction.html)

*We are on facebook so if you would like your events featured please send details to the Editor.*



...and finally

## BBKA Spring Convention

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### Now open for bookings

Harper Adams University, Shropshire, TF10 8NB

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2025

Bumper Trade Show Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> April\*

20+ Lectures & 70+ Workshops/Seminars

Wristband ticket prices held at 2023 prices

Trade Show only tickets just £6 on the day\*

Programme, FAQs & Bookings: [www.bbka.org.uk/springconvention](http://www.bbka.org.uk/springconvention)



### MEMBERS' COUNTY NEWSLETTER

Thanks to this month's contributors. If you don't have access to the internet and want further details of anything in this newsletter, please contact the Editor & County Secretary. Likewise, if you would like to contribute to future newsletters please send articles and photographs to:

Graham Elliott, Editor & County Secretary, no later than the 20<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month.  
[secretary@westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk](mailto:secretary@westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk)

**We're on the web:**  
[www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk](http://www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk)



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