



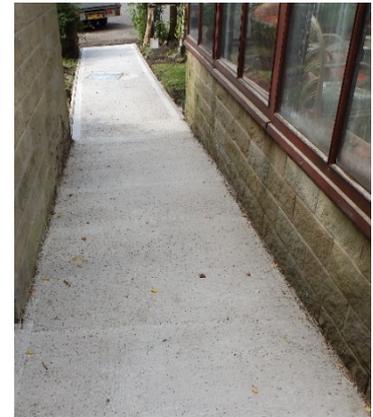
LUNE VALLEY COMMUNITY BEEKEEPERS NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2019

Apiary improvements

We are delighted to say that the all-weather base for the apiary, which will permit wheelchair access at all times, is now completed.

Two working parties of members cleared the area of weeds and moved the hives which allowed Taylor Environmental Ltd to begin preparing the site on Monday 29th July and completing the project on Wednesday, 31st July. Tidying up the site and returning the hives was finalised by 4th August. The following photographs show the work in progress and final outcome.





We took advantage of having the contractor on site, to lay a path from the car park to the summer house and toilet block.

We are also very grateful to The Skelton Trust for a grant of £1000 towards the cost of this project. The grant, together with the various donations made since our appeal was launched last year, provided the funding necessary to complete the project.

Thank you to everyone, members and non-members, who helped with this project.

Club meetings in September

8th Sept Autumn Apiary Inspection Club Apiary 10-00am to 1-00pm

An opportunity for all members, especially new members, to experience an Autumn inspection and assess how well the bees are prepared for winter. Protective clothing will be provided for those who do not have it, but please remember to bring your own wellies.

15th Sept Meadow Mowing Day Club Apiary 10-00am to 4-00pm

We need to prepare the meadow for winter by scything or strimming it, taking away the cuttings, digging out some larger weeds and sowing a mixture of perennial and annual native wildflower seeds, designed to improve and enrich the current flora! **Please come and help for all or part of the day if you can.** If you can bring your own scythe, strimmer or rake, that would be very helpful. If possible, we need to complete this in one day.

21st Sept North Lancashire Business Expo Lancaster Brewery

We have generously been offered a free exhibition stand at Lancaster Chamber of Commerce's Business Expo, by the Lancaster branch of Handelsbanken. Whilst the first day of the Expo is very much focused on business to business activities, the second day, Saturday, is focused on the community. **We need volunteers to man the stand for all or part of the day. Please get in touch if you can help.**

WARNING

One of our members recently purchased a nuc from a supplier about 90 minutes car journey away from their apiary. Inspecting the nuc at 9-00am, everything was fine with four frames of brood and two of stores in a Payne's poly nuc. The nuc was put in the car boot and arrived back at its new home some two hours later. Opening up the nuc, the member found most of the bees dead and the combs in a melted mass on the floor of the nuc.

As this so sadly illustrates, temperatures within sealed hives can rise rapidly and keeping bees adequately ventilated whilst in transit, is crucial. If you have to move bees in warm weather, investing in, or making, a tight-fitting travelling screen which provides ample ventilation whilst containing the bees, is a very worthwhile investment.

Any answers

After speaking to a group of people, it is customary to invite questions. Usually the questions are straightforward to answer but some are not! Recently asked questions include:

- Is beekeeping ethical?
- Is beekeeping green?
- Can Vegans eat honey?

If you have any answers, please let me know and I shall share them through the newsletter.

Out Apiary Sites

We have been offered an excellent apiary site near Tatham in the Lune Valley and the possibility of another site in the grounds of the Heysham substation. If anyone is interested in either, please give me a call.

Entrance discs



My usual technique for collecting swarms is to shake the swarm into a poly nuc, place it as near to the swarm site as possible with the entrance disc in the queen excluder position, and leaving it until the evening. This year I used a different type of poly nuc which had a different type of entrance wheel and it quickly became apparent that the bees were struggling to get through the gaps and bunching up outside. Several other members have reported similar issues so I decided to do some measuring of the gaps. The results were:

Supplier	Colour	Gap size(s)	Thickness
Bee Supplies	red	4.3	2.5mm
Maisemore	Yellow/red	3.9	2mm
Thornes	silver	3.96mm	1mm
Thornes	black	3.8mm to 4.3mm	1.5mm

Individual bees struggled to get through the red and yellow Maisemore wheels but had no difficulty with the others. However, the small size of all but the black wheel usually caused a large build-up of bees trying to get in and out.

Bees in a chimney



When bees swarm they often settle in inconvenient places. Possibly the most inconvenient place is inside a chimney. This is potentially dangerous as the nest could prevent noxious fumes from escaping up the chimney or the wax in the nest could catch fire.

I recently got a call from an elderly man asking if I could remove a swarm from his chimney, preferably without causing any harm to the bees. As access to the chimney from the bottom would have required the removal of the gas fire fitted into the fireplace by a qualified gas fitter, going in from the top seemed to be the only option.

The idea I came up with involved fitting a poly nuc with 6 frames of new and drawn foundation over the top of the chimney pot so that the bees would have to fly through the nuc in order to get out to forage. The hope was that the bees would move up into the

nuc, which could then be removed with the bees.



Getting onto the roof and actually fitting the nuc to the chimney pot in a manner that would be safe and secure proved to be more challenging, but with the help of John Spendlove of Glow Stoves, a plan was devised.

However, the swarm had been in the chimney for at least two weeks and had already drawn out a number of combs which were fixed into the chimney's cowl. Some of these contained sealed brood! So in the end it was just a simple matter to lift off the cowl with all the comb, put it into a sack and take it off to my apiary for re-housing.



Asian hornet sighting.

On 3rd July, the National Bee Unit confirmed a sighting of an individual, female Asian hornet in New Milton, Hampshire. Based upon visual examination, the hornet is likely to be a queen. Monitoring is underway to detect any other Asian hornets in the vicinity and local beekeepers are asked to be vigilant.

American Foul Brood (AFB)

Concerns continue to be expressed about a serious and growing outbreak of AFB in Wales according to Pembrokeshire BKA.

Creating an apiary

These notes are mainly intended for newer members considering setting up an apiary over the autumn and winter months.

Sites

There are two types of possible site, your own garden or on someone else's garden or land. This is usually referred to as an out apiary.

Placing bee hives on other people's land requires a sensible consideration of health and safety. Is the site near any areas of public access (such as footpaths, playing areas, recreation areas, bridle ways, etc)? Are the bees likely to interfere with the work of the farmer or landowner?

Ideally an apiary should be sited an appropriate distance (8 m+) away from the nearest footpath, etc. with a barrier (fence, wall or hedge) between the hives and the public access. If no height barrier, such as a hedge, exists between the hive and the area of public access, the distance should be increased (e.g. to 15 m+) as the bees can fly low (particularly on windy days) and get caught in the hair or clothing of passers-by. A very high wall, such as those typically associated with walled gardens, may be enough separation for most apiaries, even with a path directly on the other side.

Siting an apiary on an allotment requires additional considerations such as, do the terms and conditions permit this and will it interfere with other allotment holders? Whilst there are many examples of this type of arrangement being very successful, there are equally many examples where it has not!

It is important to consider wind exposure. If strong draughts are able to enter the hive, this risks chilling the colony, resulting in the loss of brood during the season and loss of adults during the winter. Firstly, the hive entrance ideally needs to be pointed away from the prevailing wind. This is normally achieved by siting the hives in the lee of a hedge or wall. If for practical reasons this cannot happen, then the hive should be orientated with the entrance away from the direction of the wind. If in a garden or allotment, a beekeeper may be able to erect a fence or plant a hedge to provide wind shelter.

If a location is quite exposed, the beekeeper should strap the hive to the ground or keep a heavy weight such as a rock or brick on the hive roof to prevent it from blowing off. Shortly following any gales it is worth paying a visit to the apiary just in case a hive has been blown over.

Out apiary sites, especially those on farmland, should be checked for potential risks from flooding, spraying etc and be adequately protected by a stockproof fence.

Access

Having your bees close by, such as in your own garden, is a distinct advantage as it enables you to observe them closely and store equipment nearby.

Out apiaries can involve carrying heavy equipment over long distances as safe facilities for storing equipment may not be available close by. These factors should not be lightly dismissed. Reasonable vehicular access is a decided advantage.

Security

It is important to assess your apiary's security from two aspects, people and animals.

Unfortunately, thefts of bees and equipment are increasing. Where possible, your apiary should not be visible from roads or public pathways, which may mean the erection of a solid fence and, in the longer term, a hedging screen. Apiaries should be registered on Bee Base and equipment branded with the registration number. Although this does not prevent theft, it can make it easier to find the culprits.

In the case of apiaries in fields and paddocks, it is necessary to protect the apiary with a stockproof fence. Both farm and wild animals seem to enjoy rubbing up against bee hives with often disastrous consequences for both.

Hives

There is an increasingly large range of hives from which you can choose so ideally you should try to gain some hands-on experience before buying and choose one with which you can work comfortably. It is also useful to choose a hive that is used by other members of your club so that help is readily available. Unless you are particularly interested in working with different types of hive, it is preferable to choose one type and stick with it.

Space

Whilst a lot has been written about how to arrange hives in an apiary, the reality is that it does not really matter provided that you have sufficient space to work around the hive, and in doing so you are not working in front of another hive impeding the bees' flight path.

Neighbours

Before placing any bees in your own garden, consider the reaction of your neighbours. Some people may not mind living next to a few bee hives providing there is enough distance or a high enough fence or hedge to keep the bees away. However, many people will be alarmed to find they have bees just on the other side of the fence. Hoping that they will not notice is something that should not be relied on as the moment they do notice (and they will) might lead to an order being served (under public nuisance laws) from the local authority to move them within so many days.

Bear in mind that at some stage, despite best efforts to breed mild tempered queens, the occasional colony will become defensive and may attack anyone nearby, particularly following a hive inspection. Be prepared, at short notice, to move the hive to another, less public location.

Forage

If you are limiting your apiary to three permanent colonies, unless you have a lot of beekeeping neighbours, forage should not be a problem in most seasons. However, once you have colonies in your apiary it is worthwhile occasionally checking to see that your bees have ample stores.

Number of colonies

The number of colonies that can be kept on one site depends largely on the size of the site and the amount of forage available. When colonies are kept close together and forage is short, the bees can become quite bad tempered. Ideally you should plan your site to accommodate up to three permanent colonies, together with some space for housing swarms and nucleus hives, which can subsequently be given away, sold or united with the permanent colonies later in the season.

Whilst all this might seem to make setting up an apiary a daunting task, considering and dealing with issues in advance will provide enormous future dividends and avoid a lot of grief!

Club activities programme for the remainder of 2019-2020

16th Oct **Speaker Meeting** **Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm**
Topic: Bee Together Project **Speaker: Catherine Mercer**
Catherine is the Coordinator of the Bee Together project which aims to connect communities and landscapes to reverse the decline of wild pollinators, and in particular, wild bees. The project involves coordinating and delivering capital works and activity-based projects along the B-Line from Lancaster to Leeds, connecting communities to create pollinator super-highways.

Wed **Speaker Meeting** **Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm**
13th Nov **Topic: Bees for Development** **Speaker: Bob Spencer**
Bob is a Trustee of Bees for Development, an organisation that promotes sustainable beekeeping to combat poverty and to build sustainable, resilient livelihoods. It supports beekeepers to maintain environments that are good for bees, for biodiversity, and for people. Bees for Development works with local partners on community-based projects, and provides a wide-range of information services.

Sun **Managing woodland for pollinators** **Club Apiary** **10-00am to 4-00pm**
17th Nov A one day practical course, run by Catherine Mercer of Bee Together, which will include coppicing and other practical skills.

Wed **Speaker Meeting** **Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm**
11th Dec **Topic: The two frame nucleus and obtaining bees** **Speaker: Fred Ayres**
Fred will explain the various ways of obtaining bees, together with their advantages and disadvantages, and then explain the two frame nucleus approach for those interested in increasing their colonies or wishing to participate in a club project around this next season.

2020

Wed **Social Event** **Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm**
8th Jan
The evening will start with wine and cheese followed by another opportunity to see "*More than Honey*", a remarkable documentary film made in 2013 by the Swiss filmmaker Marcus Imhoof, which looks into the fascinating world of bees, and showing small family beekeepers and industrialised honey farms. "*More than Honey*" is a film on the relationship between mankind and honey bees, about nature and about our future. It is well worth watching.

Wed **Speaker Meeting** **Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm**
12th Feb **Topic: The Woodland Trust** **Speaker: Paul Littlewood**
Paul will explain the work of the Woodland Trust and provide advice on how we should manage the woodland at our Club apiary.

Wed **Speaker Meeting** **Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm**
11th Mar **Topic: Thermoregulation in the hive** **Speaker: Keith Bartlem**
Keith is an airline pilot, and experienced beekeeper. His talk will help to improve our understanding of how, why, and when bees monitor and alter the hive temperature and is particularly relevant in our usage of insulated hives.

Death sentence on Turkish bee



A Turkish [bee](#) carried into Britain in holidaymakers' luggage is to be killed. The bee, believed to be *Osmia avoetia*, has been busily constructing cocoons out of flower petals in the conservatory of the Toy family since their return from Dalaman last week. They say the bee waits patiently by the back door of their Bristol home every morning and gets on with creating intricate nests as soon as it is allowed inside. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) confirmed it was preparing to catch and kill the animal.

It follows warnings from the British Beekeepers Association (BBKA) that the bee could endanger native species by spreading deadly viruses, or by multiplying and eventually outcompeting local rivals.

However, Tim Lovett MBE, a former BBKA president, said the Turkish insect was unlikely to pose a threat. "To be dangerous it would need to set up a viable home and start breeding, and if it hasn't brought a mate with it then the chances of that must be next to none."

The bee decided not to take any chances and moved on before the Defra officials arrived to kill it!

A spokesman for the Animal and Plant Health Agency, part of Defra, warned travellers to check their luggage thoroughly before returning to the UK, especially if it has been kept outside. The APHA spokesman said that if people do find a foreign insect after returning from abroad, they should report it, along with the dates and location of the foreign trip, as well as supplying a photograph of the insect if possible.



Osmia avoetia is a solitary bee that makes individual nests from flower petals.

Russia alarmed by large fall in bee populations

Large areas of central and southern Russia have seen a major decline in their bee populations in recent months. The head of the Russian beekeepers' union, Arnold Butov, said 20 regions had reported mass bee deaths. The affected regions include Bryansk and Kursk, south of Moscow, and Saratov and Ulyanovsk on the Volga River. Mr Butov, quoted by Russian media, said the crisis might mean 20% less honey being harvested. Some officials blamed poorly regulated pesticide use. Yulia Melano, at the rural inspection service Rosselkhoznadzor, complained that her agency had lost most of its powers to control pesticide use since 2011. Russia produces about 100,000 tonnes of honey annually. Mr Butov said the union's members were collecting data on bee losses, so that by 1 August a detailed report could be submitted to the Russian government.

BEE KEEPING MYTHS



Honey bees know their owners and don't sting them!

Oh, really!

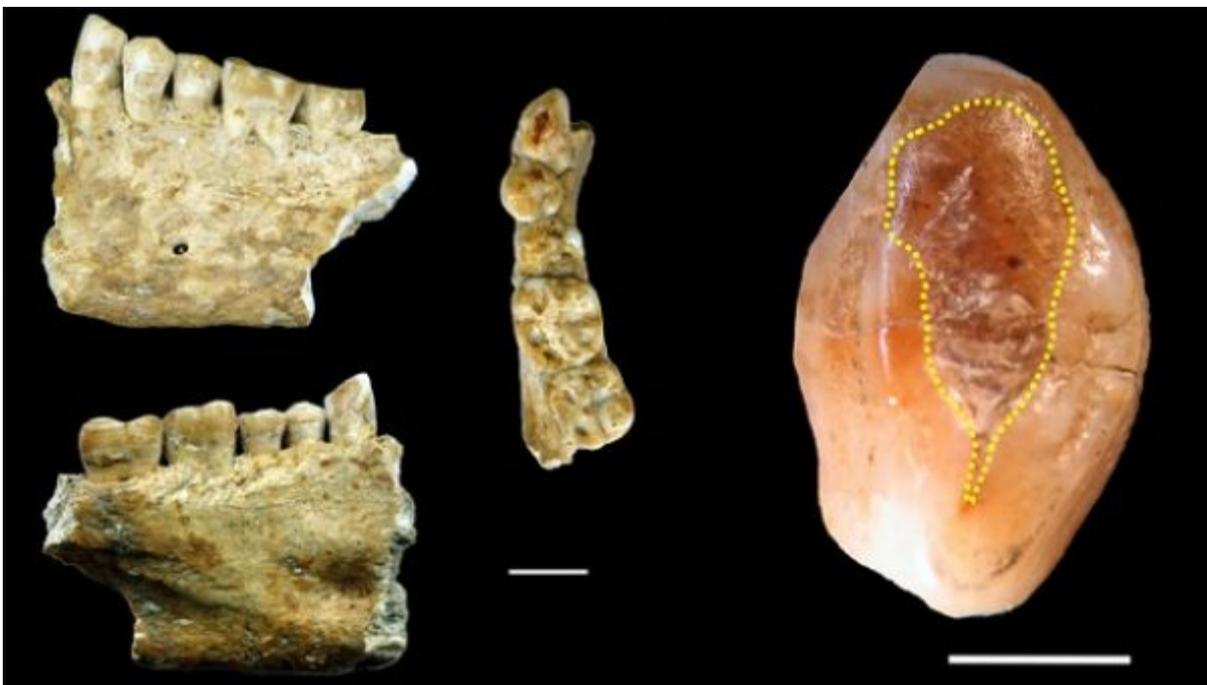
Beeswax Filling Found in 6,500-Year-Old Human Tooth

Evidence that stone-age dentists were at work nearly seven millennia ago was discovered in Eastern Europe.

A team of mostly Italian researchers studied a human jawbone, found in Slovenia near the Italian border, that contains a cracked canine tooth with a beeswax filling inside. "This finding is perhaps the most ancient evidence of pre-historic dentistry in Europe and the earliest known direct example of therapeutic-palliative dental filling so far," said research leader Federico Bernardini at the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics in a press release.

Other evidence of Neolithic dentistry is extremely scant. For example, several molar crowns have been found in Pakistan, and an artificial tooth was found in the Egyptian cemetery of Gebel Ramlah.

The researchers believe that the beeswax was applied shortly before or after the man's death as the edges of the tooth fracture are not worn. If he was still alive, the filling was probably used to reduce tooth sensitivity while chewing.



Don't tell Defra!

Under a proposed new law, from 1st January 2020 it will be illegal, in Texas, for anyone to catch and re-house a swarm of bees unless they:

- have completed an approved 160-hour course in beekeeping and swarm removal
- carry public liability insurance of £500,000 and employer's liability insurance of £250,000
- have a licence issued by, or on behalf of, the Texas Department of Agriculture!



From Bus Stops to Bee Stops



In the Dutch city of Utrecht, 316 bus stops now have a green roof. They do not only look great, they also help capture fine dust, store rainwater and provide cooling in the summertime.

Fred Ayres, Editor & Chairman

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The Lune Valley Long Hive

An innovative but simple long hive



Only £325

Only obtainable from Lune Valley Community Beekeepers

Essential features:

- Designed by bee-centric beekeepers for bee-centric beekeepers
- Comfortably houses one colony of bees without the need for additional supers or brood boxes
- Has a hinged roof to avoid the need for heavy lifting
- Can be managed by a person in a wheelchair
- Can be used with 14 x 12 frames (recommended), standard brood frames or top bars
- Has a removable floor tray which can act as a biological sump or a debris board for varroa counts
- Has 2" thick wooden walls which provide five times more insulation than a standard hive
- Roof space is ventilated and has space for a jumbo feeder
- Has a metal roof
- Is manufactured locally, especially for LVCB
- Is constructed from pine wood to reduce the cost but will need an external preservative or coat of paint
- External measurements: L 86cm, H 77cm, W 52cm
- Despite its high specification, it is economically priced whilst offering exceptional value for money.