



# WEYBRIDGE BEEKEEPERS

## WEYBRIDGE DIVISION ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2025 SBKA AGM

**Financial** The Weybridge division remains in a healthy financial situation. Income in the 2024-5 financial year was £16.7k and expenditure was £12.4k. Total funds are £79.8k, of which about half is in a fund for the development of a clubhouse for the division. A £1000 donation has been received from Mercedes Benz, which will be spent on bee suits for the teaching apiary.

**Membership** At the end of the 2024/25 financial year, the Weybridge division had 142 members. This is a decrease of fourteen on the previous year, due to fewer members in the Registered and Partner categories. The number of members with bees decreased from 113 to 103.

**Committee** The full committee met on 5 occasions during the year.

**A new logo for the Weybridge division** The old Weybridge logo of a WBC hive has served us well for many years but something simpler is needed for the digital age. The new logo (see above) was designed by Kelly Price and Kavita Sud.

**Bee health** There were no cases of AFB but there was one diagnosis of EFB in the Weybridge area in 2025. A members' Nosema diagnosis clinic was held on 14 April.

**Bee swarms** Swarm calls were received earlier in the year than in 2024 and also tailed off earlier. The BBKA swarm website page is used as the first point of contact for people reporting swarms. This directs callers to one of several local swarm collectors. A recruitment drive has added more names to the Weybridge swarm collector list. Householdors with swarms are invited to make a no-obligation donation to the Weybridge division. Swarms are passed on to new members and those who have had winter losses. Members being given swarms are asked to make a donation to the division related to the size of the swarm. This covers the expenses of the swarm collectors. With EFB having been present in part of our area, care is taken to put swarms from affected areas into an isolation apiary until it is confirmed that the bees are healthy.

**Apiaries** The Weybridge division has its longstanding apiary site for members at Row Town. The Apiary Manager is Claire Balla. The division's teaching apiary is located in the SUEZ Eco Park near Shepperton. A Year One apiary for new beekeepers on the Weybridge course is also in the Eco Park. Outside of the practical sessions period, the teaching apiary is managed by Chris Ford. Two taster sessions for prospective new beekeepers were held at the apiary in August.

**New Teaching Apiary and Education Centre/Clubhouse Project** This is in the Eco Park adjacent to the SUEZ-managed recycling and waste disposal centre near Shepperton. Basic beekeeping equipment is available for members to buy from stock held in one of the shipping containers. The SUEZ management continues to give us support. We have access to a meetings room, where the winter theory course is held. Further development of a potential club house is dependent on a planning agreement between SUEZ and Surrey County Council, which owns the land.

**Honey Yields** 2025 broke records for hours of sunshine and high temperatures. There was a good nectar flow in spring and mid-summer, with many members recording high yields of honey.

**Honey Shows** The Surrey Honey Show, at Denbies Vineyard near Dorking, was held on 14 September. The National Honey Show was held on 23-25 October. The number of Weybridge division members putting entries into these shows was disappointingly low this year.

**Asian Hornet Action Team** Information on Asian hornet was given out at the Surrey Day on D'Oyly Carte Island on 10 April, at Shepperton Fair on 14 June, at the Weybridge Festival on 21 June, at

Chertsey Agricultural Show on 9-10 August, and at the Weybridge Christmas Festival on 29 November (to be confirmed). Talks given to garden clubs, wildlife groups etc have also provided opportunities to promote Asian hornet awareness. No confirmed sightings of Asian hornet were made in the Weybridge division area. Weybridge AHAT members attend Zoom meetings of the Surrey AHAT liaison group.

**Education** Fifteen people attended the Weybridge winter theory course for new beekeepers and 17 attended the practical classes. Students who miss a lecture can catch up by watching a video of the lecture that was made during the covid period. The practical sessions were held at our teaching apiary site in the SUEZ Eco Park near Shepperton during 26 April – 28 June. The principal lecturer for the theory course for new beekeepers is Andrew Halstead. Steve Brooks does the course administration. The teaching apiary manager outside the practical sessions period is Christopher Ford.

**Web site and social media** The Weybridge division's website is [www.veybridgebeekeepers.org](http://www.veybridgebeekeepers.org). It has a password-protected members' area that enables the separation of information that is of interest to members only from pages that are aimed at the wider public. The members' area has been updated so the map showing the location of participating members can also show the location of Asian hornet traps/bait stations and the location of members who hold stocks of the attractant bait.

**Equipment** No significant items of equipment have been purchased during 2025.

#### **Events**

- 24 January Short talks by members: Chris Ford 'An accidental beekeeper'; Jane Hunter 'BBKA Basic examination'; Andrew Halstead 'Insects, the most important creatures on the planet'; Sue Lawes 'Beekeeping experiences'
- 15 February Talk by Malcolm Clarke '50+ years with bees'
- 17 March Talk by David Rudland on "Bee diseases and hive pests"
- 31 March Quiz and chips night organised by David Ramsay and Lisa Davis.
- 14 April Nosema diagnosis clinic, plus talk by Paul Doeman on his beekeeping journey
- 6 April Working party at the teaching apiary to clean equipment and assemble frames
- 27 April Garden meeting hosted by Michael Main; demonstration of shook swarm procedure, spring cleaning of hives and disease check
- 10 May Surrey Day on Doyly Carte Island. Information stand and honey sales
- 7 June Formal opening of the members' shop at the Teaching Apiary
- 14 June Shepperton Fair – honey sales and beekeeping/Asian hornet publicity
- 21 June Festival – honey sales and beekeeping/Asian hornet publicity
- 19 July 'A walk on the wild side' – looking at solitary bees and wasps on Puttenham Common, led by Andrew Halstead
- 9-10 August Chertsey Agricultural Show – honey sales and beekeeping/Asian hornet publicity
- 13 and 16 August Taster days at the teaching apiary for prospective beekeepers
- 17 August Barbeque hosted by Paul Bunclark at Row Town. Presentation on preparing hives for the winter
- 14 September Surrey Honey Show at Denbies Vineyard, near Dorking
- 23-25 October National Honey Show at Sandown Park, Esher
- 2 November Weybridge division AGM – held in person and on Zoom
- 30 November Weybridge Christmas Festival – honey sales and beekeeping/Asian hornet publicity
- 6 December Surrey Beekeepers Association AGM hosted by Croydon division

**Andrew Halstead, Chairman, Weybridge Division of Surrey Beekeepers Association**