



THE BUZZzzzz



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Photo Credit: Mark Smith

Welcome to the September 2026 CSBKA Newsletter!

Thank you all for your patience during The Buzz's hiatus since our last edition in February. I'm delighted to say that we can now return to a more regular monthly schedule.

The beekeeping season seems to have flown by! It began with a well-attended Beginners' Course at our new venue in Pease Pottage, followed by our regular Saturday morning practical sessions at the Club Apiary, with Newbees and club members getting plenty of hands-on experience. Sadly this month will bring the end to our Apiary sessions with our final meeting/Clean up Party and BBQ on Saturday 19th September.

Our Events Team have also been out and about, promoting the Club and helping to educate the public about beekeeping. Our Event Stand will be at The Big Nibble, Horsham on Sunday 6th September and at the West Grinstead Ploughing Match on Saturday 19th. Meanwhile, the Committee and Apiary Team are working hard behind the scenes to finalise this year's Winter Meeting programme.

I hope your bees are all doing well and that you've enjoyed a good honey harvest this year. There's plenty to catch up on, so enjoy this edition of The Buzz!

Yolanda Noye



NEWS FROM THE APIARY – Carl Slade



Apiary Round-Up

It's been a busy and successful year at the Club Apiary to date. We started with a well-attended Beginners' Course at our new venue in Pease Pottage. We also changed the format of the course this year, with members of our Apiary Team delivering presentations throughout the morning, followed by hands-on practical experience at the Training Apiary in the afternoon.

The new, larger venue also gave us the opportunity to have several "stands" dedicated to different aspects of beekeeping, including a book stall, equipment stand, apitherapy stand, candle making and, of course, a honey stand. The Newbees have since been regularly joining members for the Saturday morning practical training sessions at the Apiary.

Our Apiary Team members have also been delivering a variety of short talks at the beginning of the Saturday sessions, covering topics relevant to the honeybee keeping season and the activities taking place in the Apiary. We have just a couple more talks to go (see below) before we wrap up the practical sessions at the end of September.

5 th September	Preparing for Winter – Full and nucleus colonies	Yo Melvyn
12 th September	Storing equipment for winter – stores/drawn comb/supers	
19 th September	Apiary Clean up and BBQ	
26 th September	<i>Apiary Team Only - End of Season Conclusion Meeting</i>	

The honey harvest has been particularly good this year, with the Club Apiary producing almost **500 lbs of honey** – a remarkable achievement considering the weekly disturbance to the colonies.

Before we bring the season to a close, we will be holding our usual end-of-season BBQ and Apiary clean-up. However, there is one project we would very much like to complete ready for winter: replacing the precarious, rotten wooden pallet and chipboard floor in the lean-to. If you can help with this project, please let me (Carl) know. It is likely to be included as part of our Apiary Clean up on the 19th September will involve the construction of a sturdy timber decking subframe, before fixing decking boards to it. The frame will be supported on slate slabs to raise it off the ground and, hopefully, help prevent future rot.

It would be very helpful to get a few willing extra volunteers together on the 19th to help get this done before winter sets in!

... in the meantime I share a selection of photos from a few of our meetings this year



18th April – Swarm Management, Melvyn Essen



2nd May – Colony Increasing, Melvyn Essen



23rd May – Queenless Colonies and Requeening, Elton Francis



30th May – Queen Rearing, Melvyn Essen



Our feline Apiary guardian!



25th July – Treatment Free, Low Intervention – Dr Nadia Ziyada



8th August – Feeding Bees and why, Brian Lambert

Don't forget - Apiary Clean Up/BBQ and Store Shed lean-to renovation (!) 19th September





CS Let's not treat Group – Melvyn Essen



UPDATE

Many of our members are actively taking part in this long-term project, with some keeping colonies that have now gone one or two years without varroa treatment. The most important, and very simple, part of the project is monitoring our colonies for hygienic traits, and breeding from or taking splits from colonies that show the best hygienic behaviour.

Steve Riley, who has kindly given us three “Winter Talks” over the years has been helping us through this journey. As a lot of you already know, he has carried out extensive research into varroa resistance and has colonies that have gone eight years plus without treatment. He has also written a practical guide for beekeepers *The Honey Bee Solution to Varroa* which explains his research and methods for everyone to follow.

Last year Steve invited a small group from CSBKA to his own apiary where we monitored varroa trays and examined several colonies. He also explained his methods of insulating the hives and his approach to providing winter stores, based on trying to replicate some of the conditions in which honeybees naturally live in cavities such as trees hollows, while still using conventional hives!

Steve has joined forces with Prof Stephen Martin, Rhona Toft and Joe Ibbertson to form Varroa Resistance UK. If you would like to find out more about their work, look at their website www.varroaresistant.uk

PROGRESS AT OUR TRAINING APIARY

Down at the Training Apiary we are seeing increasingly good results from our own monitoring. Looking back, I'm pretty sure some of our colonies may have been displaying useful hygienic behaviour before we fully understood what we were seeing. We regularly saw “Bald Brood” and now recognise that this can be the result of “sniffer bees” uncapping cells to investigate for varroa infested brood.

For several years the apiary has treated for varroa just once a year, after the honey harvest, using Formic acid. As Steve says, it's a good way to start the journey. By just treating once a year helps reduce varroa numbers before the production of your winter bees. Any colonies suffering high varroa levels during the rest of the year can then be considered for requeening.

Bringing you up to date we have been monitoring our colonies closely, with Nadia doing a fantastic job of leading the monitoring and recording the results in graphs and other useful formats. Several colonies were not treated last autumn and have continued to thrive. As a result, we believe we are now ready to take the next step and leave all our colonies untreated this autumn.

In addition, we were lucky enough to be offered two nucs from Steve's apiary which we purchased. These colonies have gone for eight years plus without varroa treatment. Luckily, I had previously put in a request for any of his spare queens to come our way and bingo! The two nucs are now in full hives and doing well so will hopefully provide us with some valuable breeding stock for next season, alongside our own colonies of course as well. By keeping our apiary almost untreated we hope to encourage and preserve good varroa resistant traits within our own colonies and, through the production of drones, contribute to spreading these genetics among the wider local bee population.

If there are any of you wanting to join our WhatsApp group “CS Varroa Resistance, let's not treat” let me know and I will add you.



WHAT SHOULD YOU CHARGE FOR YOUR HONEY



Following a recent talk given by myself (Yolanda) and Vicky at one of the recent Apiary meetings it became apparent that it would be extremely useful for there to be clearer guidance for members on what changes when beekeeping moves from being purely a personal hobby to the sale of honey to the public.

There appears to be some uncertainty about this distinction. Someone can quite legitimately keep bees as a hobby, but selling honey on a regular basis – whether directly from home, at local events, through social media or at a market – can bring additional responsibilities. These may include requirements relating to food business registration, food hygiene, traceability, labelling, record keeping, insurance and, depending on the circumstances, tax. NB: most hobby income is tax free under £1000, but you must declare it.

Describing yourself as a “hobby beekeeper” does not necessarily mean that these requirements do not apply. The fact that beekeeping is not your main source of income, or that you only produce and sell a relatively small quantity of honey, does not in itself remove the responsibilities associated with selling food to the public.

This is an area where many new or small-scale honey sellers may simply be unaware of what is required of them. There is an important difference between producing honey for your own use or sharing it informally with friends and family, and actively selling honey to customers.

There is also a wider issue here for those who sell honey commercially. Many professional and commercial bee farmers work hard to ensure that their honey is produced, packaged and labelled to the required standards and that the product they put before the public is both compliant and of good quality. It can therefore be frustrating to see honey being offered for sale where even the basic labelling requirements under the Honey Regulations have not been followed.

Labelling is, in many respects, one of the more straightforward aspects of complying with the rules. If a seller has overlooked something as fundamental as a legally required label, it naturally raises questions about whether they are aware of, or have considered, the other responsibilities that come with selling food to the public.

Setting a price for your honey can be one of the trickiest decisions when selling from home, at a local stall or to friends and neighbours. Charge too much and you may worry about putting customers off; charge too little and you risk undervaluing the months of time, skill and care that go into producing it. Often, we simply end up guessing.

Featured in this month's BBKA News, The Honey Index is a free community tool designed to make pricing a little easier. Enter the first part of your postcode and you can see average local honey prices based on real figures submitted by beekeepers across the country. You can also contribute prices you've seen locally and download a free report, which can be useful when explaining your pricing to customers or retailers. It's completely free, requires no sign-up and doesn't ask for any personal information. Just a simple way to help you price your honey with greater confidence.

The more beekeepers who contribute local prices, the more useful the Index becomes for everyone. So, if you sell your honey, why not take a look by clicking on the link below and add your local prices too?

[The Honey Index](#)



And, in case you missed it, there was also a recent discussion on the Club WhatsApp group about the reuse of honey jars.

Please be assured that CSBKA is not trying to single anyone out, criticise what they are doing or tell members how they should run their beekeeping. Our aim is simply to **educate and inform**, so that everyone is aware of the additional requirements that can come into play when you move from producing honey for yourself to exchanging money for goods.

The legislation and responsibilities surrounding the sale of food can be more extensive than many people realise, and it is surprisingly easy to find yourself within those requirements without necessarily intending to operate a “business” in the traditional sense.

We are certainly not the fun police! If you are thinking about selling your honey, our first recommendation would always be to take a little time to familiarise yourself with the current UK legislation, read the relevant guidance and make sure that you are following the rules.

A little knowledge at the outset can save a lot of confusion later – and ultimately helps protect both you and the reputation of our wonderful honey.



YELLOW LEGGED HORNET – Yolanda Noye



The following is the latest update from BeeBase as at 03 09 26.

167 credible yellow-legged hornet sightings have been reported in the UK in 2026.

53 nests have been found and identified.

To view the location of destroyed nests, please visit the [map page](#) and choose the Asian Hornet map layer using the 'Layer' icon in the top right hand corner of the map.

If you spot a Yellow-Legged Asian Hornet or a nest, please report it immediately via the Asian Hornet Watch App.

See it! Snap it! Send it!

Think you've seen an Asian Hornet? Report it!



Report through the Asian Hornet Watch app or www.bit.ly/asianhornetreport



'Courtesy The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), Crown Copyright'.



Your actions matter. Your reports matter.
Together, we can help protect our bees and other pollinators.

To view this short Awareness film – click on the link below:

[BBKA - YLAH Awareness Film](#)

Good4Bees Selective Hornet Traps

Following extensive research, CSBKA invested in a bulk order of **Good4Bees Selective Hornet Traps**. These traps are ideal for use around apiaries, gardens and honey bee colonies, with a unique dual-escape design that helps reduce pollinator bycatch and drowning. Normally retailing at around £25 each, plus postage, CSBKA is subsidising the cost for members, offering them for just £15 each. Why not get prepared for next year? Purchase your trap now and order your **Trapit bait** (available from many beekeeping suppliers) so you have everything ready for the start of the 2027 season.



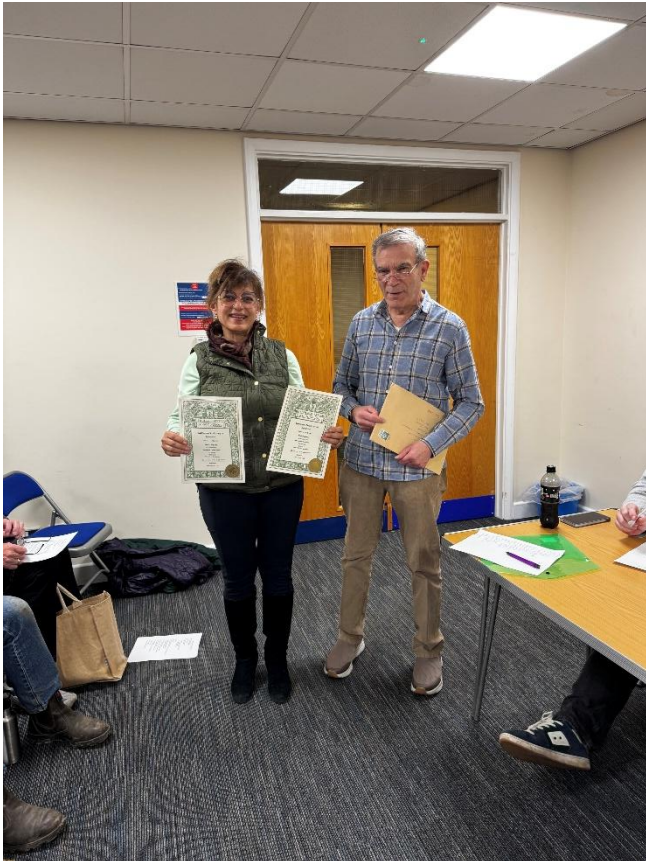


CONGRATULATIONS



Congratulations are extended to Dr Nadia Ziyada, who is steadily and impressively working her way through the BBKA examination modules.

Earlier this year, Nadia was presented with two certificates at our AGM, having successfully completed Module 1 – Honey Bee Management and Module 6 – Honey Bee Behaviour.



She has continued her studies throughout the year and has now successfully completed Module 9 - Honeybee Pests, Diseases and Poisoning, earning her the Intermediate Theory Certificate in the process. This is a fantastic achievement and reflects the considerable time, effort and commitment Nadia has put into developing her beekeeping knowledge.

Working through the BBKA modules alongside the practical experience of keeping bees is no small undertaking and Nadia is certainly making excellent progress. The Committee would like to congratulate Nadia on her achievements so far and wish her every success as she continues her journey through the remaining modules. We look forward to celebrating the next milestone with her!

A Special Recognition ...

Also presented for the first time at this year's AGM was a very special award recognising someone whose contribution to the club extends well beyond the Apiary.

Our President was delighted to present a specially engraved copper smoker to Dennis Chow, a longstanding and much valued member of CSBKA. While not every member is able to attend our Saturday meetings or regular club activities, the Committee is very aware of those who continue to support, encourage and represent the beekeeping community quietly behind the scenes.

Dennis is one of those people. His kindness, generosity of spirit and willingness to share his knowledge and experience have made him a wonderful ambassador for CSBKA and beekeeping more widely. His support and mentorship over the years have been greatly appreciated, and the Committee felt it was important to formally acknowledge the contribution he has made to our club and its members.

As a token of our appreciation the engraved copper smoker was presented to Dennis with the inscription:

"Presented to Dennis Chow - March 2026."

In appreciation of your years of mentorship, commitment and dedicated support of CSBKA and its beekeeping community"

It was a fitting tribute to someone whose contribution may often happen quietly, but whose influence and kindness have certainly not gone unnoticed. We are very grateful to Dennis for all that he has given to CSBKA over the years and are delighted to have had the opportunity to recognise him in this special way.





EVENTS



Upcoming Events!

Below are some dates for your diary.

This list will be updated monthly, so be sure to check back for updates and latest details.

7th – 13th Yellow Legged Asian Hornet Week – Save our Pollinators!

19th **CSBKA** Apiary Clean up and end of season BBQ

26th & 27th South of England Honey Show, Ardingly Showground

October

21st National Honey Day

22nd – 24th The National Honey Show, Sandown Park, Esher

November

12th **CSBKA** Winter Meeting (19:30 to 21:30 MacNaughton Hall, Pease Pottage, RH11 9AH) – *Speaker to be confirmed*

December

10th **CSBKA** Winter Meeting (19:30 to 21:30 MacNaughton Hall, Pease Pottage, RH11 9AH) – *Speaker to be confirmed*

January

14th **CSBKA** Winter Meeting (19:30 to 21:30 MacNaughton Hall, Pease Pottage, RH11 9AH) – *Speaker to be confirmed*

February

11th **CSBKA** Winter Meeting (19:30 to 21:30 MacNaughton Hall, Pease Pottage, RH11 9AH) – *Speaker to be confirmed*

27th West Sussex BKA Annual Convention (9am – 4pm @ Lodge Hill Centre, Pulborough)

March

11th **CSBKA** AGM, Social and Prize Giving (19:30 to 22:00 MacNaughton Hall, Pease Pottage, RH11 9AH)

April

3rd **CSBKA** 2026 Beekeeping Course for Beginners (Day 1) (10am – 3pm MacNaughton Hall, Pease Pottage, RH11 9AH)

10th **CSBKA** 2026 Beekeeping Course for Beginners (Day 2) (10am – 3pm MacNaughton Hall, Pease Pottage, RH11 9AH)

24th WSBKA 50th Annual Bee Market & Auction/CSBKA Cake Stall



NOTICES



The **BIG**
Nibble

DISCOVER SUSSEX PRODUCE

Sunday 6 September
10am to 4pm
Carfax, Horsham

FOOD ROCKS

 **Horsham District Council**

We need your help!

Our CSBKA show stand will be out and about again this Sunday at The Big Nibble in Horsham, and we would love some extra pairs of hands to help us make the most of this fantastic local event. The Big Nibble is returning to Horsham following the last event of this kind back in 2021. This popular Food & Drink Festival celebrates the very best of local produce, with a tempting mix of street food, local wines, ales and spirits, along with great live music and plenty to see and enjoy.

It's also a brilliant opportunity for us to showcase beekeeping and raise awareness of CSBKA within our local community. We'll be chatting to visitors about honey bees, the importance of pollinators and the joys of keeping bees. We'll also have some of our lovely local honey available to sell and will be promoting our beginners' beekeeping course to anyone tempted to take up this fascinating hobby.

If you can spare some time on Sunday to help man the stand, we would be extremely grateful. You don't need to be an expert beekeeper – just being happy to chat to visitors, share your enthusiasm for bees and help on the stand would make a real difference. Even if you can only spare an hour or two, please consider volunteering. With enough people helping, we can share the day between us and everyone gets the chance to enjoy the festival too!

If you can help please let Melvyn 07811 070294 or Pip membership@centralsussexbeekeepers.org.uk know as soon as possible. Every helping hand makes a difference and it would be wonderful to have a good CSBKA representation there to spread the word about our bees, our honey and our Association.



West Grinstead & District Ploughing Match & Agricultural Show

Volunteers urgently needed for our biggest show of the year!

The West Grinstead & District Ploughing Match is the biggest show event in the CSBKA calendar – and we really need your help to make this year's event a success!

The Society behind the show was established in 1871 and has been holding this annual event for more than 150 years. It is a fantastic celebration of the local farming community and continues to play an important role in promoting and supporting local agriculture.

This year's show takes place on **Saturday 19 September** at Fair Oak Farm, Spithandle Lane, Ashurst, BN44 3DS.

It is a long and busy day for our Show Team, who will be there from around 9:00am until after 6:30pm. We would therefore be incredibly grateful for some extra pairs of hands. We particularly need volunteers to help us cover the stand throughout the day. You do not need to be an experienced beekeeper to help. Our aim is to chat to visitors, introduce people to beekeeping, promote our Beginners' Course and sell some of our wonderful honey. You just need to bring your enthusiasm! There will always be an experienced beekeeper with you, so if anyone asks a tricky question, you won't be left to deal with it alone.

Even if you can only spare a few hours, your help would be hugely appreciated. The more volunteers we have, the easier it is for everyone and the more opportunity we have to talk to visitors and showcase CSBKA. Your entrance fee will be paid and we will also contribute towards your refreshments during the day.

To make volunteering as easy as possible, the day has been divided into three sessions:

09:00 - 12:30 Including set-up

12:30 - 15:30

15:30 - 18:30 Including take-down

You don't have to commit to the whole day – **just one session would make a real difference.**

We also need help on Friday

A small team will be needed to set up the CSBKA gazebo and show stand on Friday afternoon/early evening. If you can help, **please contact Pip as soon as possible** at membership@centralsussexbeekeepers.org.uk so that we can make sure we have enough people to cover the stand.

It really is a great event, with lots to see, plenty of activities and a fantastic atmosphere. Come along, enjoy the day and help us spread the word about CSBKA and beekeeping.

OUT APIARY OPPORTUNITIES

Local farmer who runs several farms in the Newdigate/Dorking areas offering space for an Apiary.

If you are interested please contact:

Luke Colbourne, Oaklands Park Farm, Partridge Lane, Newdigate, Dorking, RH5 5BU

M: 07732 272863 or 07595 253015

E: luke@oaklandsparkfarm.uk.

Another offer of land in the RH17 6LA, Highley Manor area, if you are interested, please contact:

E: t.melik@icloud.com