



# The London Beekeepers' Association

# LBKA News

## October, 2022

Our membership year has just ended! We hope that you would like to rejoin LBKA for this coming year if you have not already. Please follow the renewal link you were sent by email. If you haven't got it, check your spam folder and if not there, email [services@lbka.org.uk](mailto:services@lbka.org.uk) so I can resend it. We'd also like more of our membership to complete our members' survey.

This month, we have Richard's monthly message, which very aligned to Sunday's monthly meeting, so please read and attend (via Zoom) on Sunday to add your voice to our planning. Please also read about our AGM and above standing for the committee or at least pledging your help. Lack of volunteers is limiting what we can do and we are having to drop some of the good things we do due to lack of volunteers. We also have a sale of second-hand beekeeping equipment. And, as every, we have Howard advice of what we do in the apiary this month and Mark's summary of what flowers and pollinators are up to this month.

Please help make the newsletter better by providing content – photos, articles, thoughts, reflections, advice, recipes, poetry... Thanks to Richard, Howard and Mark for their regular and excellent contributions, without which there would be no newsletter.

<a href="#">From our Chair</a>	1
<a href="#">Announcements</a>	2
<a href="#">August's Committee meeting</a>	5
<a href="#">October in the Apiary</a>	5
<a href="#">Focus on Forage</a>	6
<a href="#">Upcoming events</a>	7
<a href="#">Committee</a>	8

Thank you to this month's contributors: **Richard Glassborow, David Hankins, Howard Nichols, Mark Patterson, Tristram Sutton, and Paul Youthed.** Would you like to join these esteemed contributors? If so, contact me.

*Aidan Slingsby, Editor, [services@lbka.org.uk](mailto:services@lbka.org.uk)*

## From our Chair

*Richard Glassborow*  
[chair@lbka.org.uk](mailto:chair@lbka.org.uk)

As has been mentioned many times, the LBKA Trustees are examining the character and direction of the Association to see how we can improve the core delivery of support to our members and the objects of the Charity.

Hearing from our members is crucial to this being a meaningful and effective process so this is another reminder of things we would like you to do. As always, you can of course, always contact me or one of the other



*"Up close and personal with an Ivy bee". Photo: Paul Youthed.*

Trustees in any way you feel comfortable with, but there are some formal things happening at the moment that I urge you to engage with if you haven't already.

The first is the survey that was recently circulated. It asks some simple but good questions. Thank you to the 40+ members who have already responded, the results so far are very rich but we feel a bigger sample would be a better basis for deliberation, particularly in areas where the consensus is not clear. If you haven't already, I urge you to please take a little time to respond.

The next opportunity is the October monthly meeting which is going to be on Zoom this Sunday, 9th, 11 am. I will be presenting current thinking on the Character and Direction of the Association which will hopefully stimulate debate amongst all of us. Again, please make every effort to take part in this opportunity to contribute to honey beekeeper democracy!

Looking further ahead, we have been trying for some time to re-establish face to face meetings and events to further our community. Physical meetings take a lot more time and energy (and cost) to organise than a zoom meeting. We totally understand that the world has changed since Covid but we would like to understand the pressures, obstacles, and motivations that influence individual member's decision to attend or not. By way of a practical example coming up, we are proposing to make the December meeting a festive physical gathering involving honey tasting (members honey and other products, mead etc.), a Christmas quiz (Which may be hybrid, online and F2F), drinks and mince pies. That will be December 11th, venue t.b.c. but likely to be in Vauxhall. Please put the date in your calendars now so that short notice is eliminated from the list of possible obstacles to attending.

I hope to see as many as possible get involved with all these activities either by responding, attending or by directly contacting me [chair@lbka.org.uk](mailto:chair@lbka.org.uk), or one of the other Trustees.

Stay well.

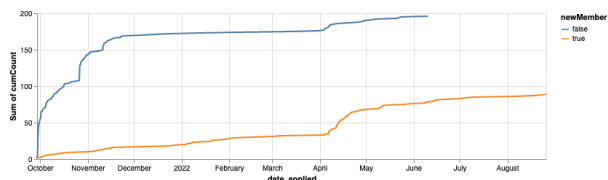
---

## Announcements

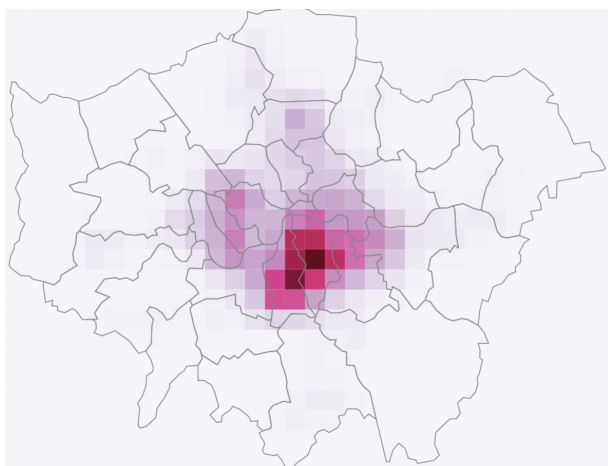
**This is our official place for announcements.** If you only read one section of the newsletter, it should be this one!

### October's Monthly Meeting and Pub Social

**October's Monthly Meeting on Sunday 9th October at 11:00** will be on Zoom (link in your email and in the Members' Area of the website). It will be devoted to discussing the character and direction of LBKA and how we can improve the core delivery of support to our



What time of year people join LBKA.



Where LBKA members live.

members and the objects of the Charity. We urge you to join in the discussion.

The **Pub Social** this month will be on **Tuesday 25th October** from 18:30 onwards at The Princess Louise (208 High Holborn, WC1V 7EP) in Central London with a spectacular interior.

**November's Monthly Meeting on 13th November** will about Winter Vorroa treatment and be at The Foundry, 17 Oval Way, London SE11 5RR.

### Membership survey

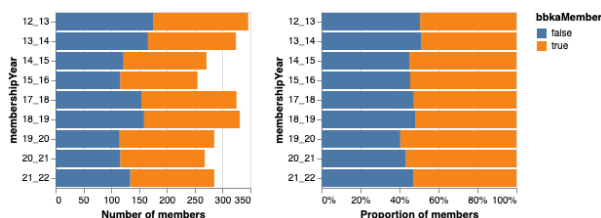
Please fill in the members' survey that you were emailed about. Thanks to the 54 people who've filled it out. We'd like to increase participation (to closer to 300!) so we have a representative range of views. Please fill it in even if you don't answer all the questions.

### Membership renewals

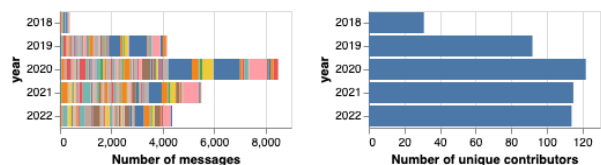
We are now in our new membership year. You all been invited to renew your membership by email. Thanks to the just under half of you who renewed their membership. We hope that the rest of you also wish to renew their membership.

### Members' Evening and AGM

Please put **Wednesday 9th November** in your diaries as this will be our **Members' Evening and AGM** which will include a social. This will be **another** opportunity for face-to-face socialising, (and a little business), with beekeepers and non-beekeeping members, and a guest speaker with a topical beekeeping message. Please come along to receive the Trustees Annual Report & Draft Accounts, to elect Trustees for the new



*Beekeeping members (people that take out BDI insurance).*



*Messages and contributors on the Bee Banter Whatsapp group.*

year, and to share a glass or two with other LBKA members.

## Trustee/committee elections

LBKA relies on members to volunteer running teaching apiaries, delivering training courses, mentoring new beekeepers, visiting schools and many, many more activities. The organisation can't function without members stepping forward to assist with these activities.

At this time of year we're particularly keen to attract members to volunteer as Trustees and/or Committee officers, to facilitate and guide the varied programme of membership services and deliver LBKA's charitable aims. Please come forward if you are interested in helping LBKA work for its members, for better beekeeping, for better public understanding, and for a better London environment.

Trustee nominations are due by 21 October – please email any of the current trustees if you'd like to talk more about our work, or if you need a proposer or second for your nomination. No contribution is too small to make a difference to the running of LBKA, so please consider making that difference.

## Volunteer in Northwest London

We have a new member looking to volunteer at an apiary, preferably in Northwest London, (but anywhere considered). Weekend availability only, due to week-day working commitments. If anyone needs a hand with their bees or has space for an extra willing learner, please contact [treasurer@lbka.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@lbka.org.uk).

## Second Hand Equipment sale

We have had a clearout of the store at Mudchute and found a fair number of WBC bits and pieces. Apart from Lot F which is new, the rest is in very used condition and would need some repair/ repainting to make it usable again.

As we run Nationals at Mudchute we don't expect to

make use of this equipment and so would like to offer it to LBKA members.

Please see the attached images of equipment which is summarised as:

- Lot A: Brood box & 3 Supers, with QE & roof, 4 lifts, 2 entrance blocks
- Lot B: Brood box & 2 Supers, with QE & roof, 4 lifts, 2 entrance blocks
- Lot C: 14x12 brood box & dummy board,
- Lot D: 1 brood box & 3 Supers, 4 lifts, 2 entrance blocks
- Lot E: 3 WBC brood boxes, of which 1 castellated
- Lot F: new super body kit.

Inspection welcomed and collection at Mudchute Farm preferably on a Monday afternoon..

If you are interested in buying any of this equipment please let me know on [apiaries@lbka.org.uk](mailto:apiaries@lbka.org.uk).

## National Honey Show

The 91st National Honey Show (Thursday 27th to Saturday 29th October) at Sandown Park Racecourse (Esher, Surrey, KT10 9AJ) is three days of talks, workshops, trade fairs and [honey competition](#). LBKA sponsors 3 classes (321, 322, and 323) so we'd encourage you to go for them, particularly as they are often won by non-LBKA members based in London. Class 321 is unusual as it's purely on taste and aroma, so worth going for.

## Old announcements from September

Check our [previous newsletters](#) or contact [services@lbka.org.uk](mailto:services@lbka.org.uk) for more details.

**Simon on Channel 4 News:** Simon Saville (LBKA's secretary) was interviewed on Channel 4 New and did an excellent job of explaining the impact the climate on insect populations.

## Old announcements from August

**Honey Labelling Petition:** If you'd like to sign the petition, do so [here](#).

**Thanks to School Food Matters volunteers:** without volunteers such as these, LBKA would not be able to do anything.

**LBKA's Pollinator Fund:** See [https://www.lbka.org.uk/pollinator\\_fund](https://www.lbka.org.uk/pollinator_fund) for details.

**LBKA videos:** Just a reminder that videos of many of our Winter Lectures, Monthly Meetings and various other stuff can be found in the [Members' Area of the website](#).

**Instagram:** Please keep sending your bee related pictures to Lucie at [instagram@lbka.org.uk](mailto:instagram@lbka.org.uk) or share them with your authorisation to publish on the Bee Banter WhatsApp group. And if you are on Insta do follow [@londonbeekeepersassociation](#).



Equipment for sale.

---

## August's Committee meeting

Here, we keep you up to date with what the committee discusses at our monthly committee meetings (and what keeps us awake at night). Let us know if you can help or have any suggestions that might help.

*Aidan Slingsby*  
[services@lbka.org.uk](mailto:services@lbka.org.uk)

**Trustee part of the meeting.** We had a discussion about the Direction and Character of LBKA in advance of Sunday's meeting on the subject where trustee and committee members were able to express their views. In general, the committee supported the Chair's (Richard's) proposal for priorities. We did some planning for the AGM, including how we might encourage more members to stand for Trustee or Committee positions. We discussed the 45 responses for the members' survey which give very rich insights into what 45 of our members think. We agreed to try and increase the response rate before analysing the results. Simon gave us a summary of an earlier post-mortem of our delivery of School Food Matters. Whilst we think that this is an excellent piece of outreach, we do not have enough volunteers to deliver it, so are likely to rethink how (or whether) we take part next year. Finally, David (treasurer) gave a financial update.

**Executive part of the meeting.** We set the meeting topics until the end of the calendar year, with varroa treatment in November followed by a Christmas quiz and social in December. LBKA will be withdrawing its apiary from Holland Park. We have a potential new location nearby. We also have some old beekeeping equipment that we will sell through the newsletter.

---

## October in the Apiary

Where we should be with our colonies at this time of year.

*Howard Nichols*  
[education@lbka.org.uk](mailto:education@lbka.org.uk)

Feeding syrup to the bees should have been completed by the end of September as the colony will now start to find it difficult to process and cap the syrup due to the colder temperature. If left uncapped then there is the

risk of fermentation and subsequent dysentery within the colony over the winter months. A colony should go into winter with at least 15kg (35lb) of stores if possible. This will reduce the possibility of the bees dying of starvation in a cold spring or the necessity for the beekeeper to feed in spring. Due to the warmer winters the bees are flying more and clustering less during winter. Brood is also usually present throughout winter which requires more heat to be released and so more stores being consumed. It is far better to ensure a full supply of winter stores in Autumn rather than having to feed candy in winter or syrup in spring, both of which, in turn, create additional problems.

The bees will now start to cluster as temperatures fall. Clustering starts at about 18°C, albeit very loose, and the cluster becomes smaller and more compact as temperatures continue to fall. They form a complete cluster at 13°C. Other than this the colony will continue to operate as usual but on a much smaller scale. The queen will still be laying a few eggs, nurse bees nurturing a smaller amount of brood and bees should still be flying in the day throughout October. Bees should be foraging on Ivy, which is the last flowering plant of the year. Another reason that feeding should now be complete is that subsequent collection of Ivy nectar will then be stored on the flanks making it easier to remove in spring if necessary. (If Ivy nectar is brought in whilst feeding then many more frames may become clogged with Ivy honey). If Apiguard was diligently applied in August and a feeding programme undertaken in September then the colony will be in optimum condition to face the harshness of the next few months. This leaves the beekeeper to make final sundry preparations for winter. The objective for October is to put the bees in the best position to deal with winter by trying to do small things to tip the scales in their favour.

**Check that hives are secure, straight and stable.** If using a wooden floor then the colony should be slightly tilted slightly forward. Bees have evolved over millions of years to deal with cold temperatures and do this with relative ease. They cannot deal with damp and condensation. During winter they need to uncap and metabolise honey to keep warm, resulting in production of water vapour. If the hive is not adequately ventilated then dampness may build up leading to fungi growth. It is essential that the hive interior remains dry throughout the winter. This is another advantage of using an open mesh floor.

**Mouseguards.** Once the night frosts commence then mice will look for a dark, warm place to hibernate. The smell and disturbance will upset the bees and, in more extreme instances, the colony can die out. Use of a mouseguard is essential as it is extremely effective but there must be no way the mice can bypass it.

**Gardening measures.** Check there are no branches grown up over summer and now overhanging the hive. If so then prune to remove. Also check that grass and weeds have not grown up around the hive as these will both reduce ventilation and promote damp. A quick



*Autumn crocus*

trim with a strimmer or garden shears should be sufficient for the winter.

**Other jobs.** Make sure that spare brood and super boxes are cleaned and put away in a cold place for the winter to deter wax moth. Placing combs in a deep freeze for 24 hours if possible kills all 4 stages of wax moth. The bees put a lot of work and resources into making the comb. The beekeeper, as custodian over the winter months, has a duty of care to look after this valuable resource until returned to its rightful owners in the spring! Other equipment such as queen excluders, crownboards should also be cleaned and stored the same way.

Finally, October is the month for the **National Honey Show**. This is the 91st year of this event and will be held at Sandown Racecourse, Esher, Surrey KT10 9AJ from Thursday, 27th October to Saturday, 9 October. If you are unsure about going then ask at the LBKA October monthly meeting. It is always more enjoyable to go with someone else if possible.

---

## Focus on Forage

Mark tells us what's in flower at this time of year. This article is the one we used last year.

*Mark Patterson*  
[forage@lbka.org.uk](mailto:forage@lbka.org.uk)

October signals the end of the active foraging season for our bees. By the end of the month our colonies must ensure they have sufficient stores of honey and pollen to last them through until spring. Pollen becomes available again when the crocus and snow drops



*Golden rod*



*Ivy blooms*

bloom but the weather is often too cool for the bees to fly to take advantage of it. Nectar is an even longer wait. It's usually April when the first substantial nectar sources begin to flow so October really is a "make-or-break" month for our bees if they still need to pack away winter stores.

Apart from ivy, substantial blooms of any particular plant are becoming rare this month. In gardens **Dahlias**, **Echinacea**, **Rudbeckia** and **Cosmos** persist but they will soon begin to keel over as the first frosts hit.

Winter flowering shrubs like **Viburnum tinus** are however starting to bloom and will peak at around New Year. These offer the bees pollen and sometimes nectar when winter days are mild enough for them to fly.



*Sedum Autumn joy*

In about a month's time we should see the first **Mahonias** begin to bloom. These are frequented by honey and buff tailed bumble bees on mild winter days.

Jobs to do in the garden this month include propagating semi ripe cuttings from your favourite flowering shrubs. Lavender, rosemary, hebe, flowering currants are all easy to propagate in this way. Push 6" cuttings into gritty compost and keep cool and moist over winter.

If you're planting bulbs for bees, October is the best time to do this.

As leaves start to drop from trees, collect and bag to make leaf mound to mulch plants next year. Mulching helps prevent plants drying out in dry weather and helps to keep them flowering and your bees well fed.

As perennials begin to die back you may want to begin clearing the old stems. Some plants benefit from having their core exposed to the cold over the winter whilst others benefit from the insulating properties of their dead stems and leaves.

---

## Upcoming events

See our [website](#) for an up-to-date version

### Sunday 9th October: Monthly meeting: Character & Direction of LBKA

11:00-13:00 at Via zoom

This month's meeting will be devoted to discussing the character and direction of LBKA and how we can improve the core delivery of support to our members and the objects of the Charity. We urge you to join in the discussion.

### Tuesday 25th October: Pub social

18:30-22:30 at *The Princess Louise, 208 High Holborn, WC1V 7EP.*

Our monthly trip to the pub will be at a the Princess Louise in Holborn.

### Thursday 27th to Saturday 29th

### October: National Honey Show

All day at *Sandown Park Racecourse, Esher, Surrey, KT10 9AJ*

The 91st National Honey Show is three days of talks, workshops, trade fairs and honey competition. LBKA sponsors classes 321, 322 and 323 which are open to all London-based beekeepers.

### Wednesday 9th November: Members' Evening and AGM

18:30-20:30 at *Roots and Shoots, Walnut Tree Walk, London, SE11 6DN.*

Some to our Members' Evening and AGM which will incorporate a social. As well as the formal business of electing a new committee, the AGM is a chance to review what LBKA has been doing and to have a say in what it should be doing in the coming year. All members are welcome (please note that you must be a current member to vote though - so don't forget to renew!). Please consider standing for the committee - speak to a committee member for more information.

### Sunday 13th November: Monthly meeting: Winter Varroa

### Treatment

11:00-13:00 at *The Foundry, 17 Oval Way, London SE11 5RR*

This month's meeting will be on winter varroa treatment.

---

## Committee

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with a member of the committee if you have any questions, requests, suggestions. We are:

- **Chair:** Richard Glassborow, [chair@lbka.org.uk](mailto:chair@lbka.org.uk)
- **Treasurer:** David Hankins, [treasurer@lbka.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@lbka.org.uk)
- **Secretary:** Simon Saville, [admin@lbka.org.uk](mailto:admin@lbka.org.uk)
- **Education:** Howard Nichols [education@lbka.org.uk](mailto:education@lbka.org.uk)
- **Membership:** Aidan Slingsby, [services@lbka.org.uk](mailto:services@lbka.org.uk)
- **Events:** Annie McGeoch, [events@lbka.org.uk](mailto:events@lbka.org.uk)
- **Apiaries:** Tristram Sutton, [apiaries@lbka.org.uk](mailto:apiaries@lbka.org.uk)
- **Mentoring:** Elliot Hodges, [mentor@lbka.org.uk](mailto:mentor@lbka.org.uk)
- **Resources:** Will Fry, [resources@lbka.org.uk](mailto:resources@lbka.org.uk)
- Stuart Kennon, [stuart.kennon@lbka.org.uk](mailto:stuart.kennon@lbka.org.uk)

Our website is <http://www.lbka.org.uk/> and the pictures are in the same order as the names above.

