

# The Essex Beekeeper

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## In this issue

**Cooking with Honey**

**The Healthy Brood Box:  
Asian Hornet**

**Divisional Round-up**

**Update from the CEC  
Chair**



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Essex Beekeepers' Association  
[www.ebka.org](http://www.ebka.org)

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## **Cooking with Honey**

**16th March 2021 7:45pm for a prompt 8pm start**

Chelmsford Division of EBKA

**C**helmsford Division warmly invites all members of EBKA, their families and friends to their monthly zoom meeting on Cooking with Honey.

A celebrated Irish chef will be delivering a tutorial and live demonstration on how to cook with local honey whilst explaining the pitfalls along the way. As we are all aware honey is a tricky substance to cook with and it helps if we can understand the science and how recipes need to be adapted.

The planned menu is as follows and on the evening our chef will also talk about various salad dressings utilising honey. The recipes will be available afterwards and published on the CBK website for downloading.

Sticky honey, Asian chicken.

Stilton, honey and grilled peach bruschetta.

Breast of duck with spiced honey and butternut squash.

Sesame and date cheesecake, with figs and honey.

Honey rhubarb ice cream.

Chelmsford Division feel that this will be of interest to many Essex beekeepers, their friends and families who consume our beautiful Essex honey and would like to do more than put it on toast.

Please put the date in your diary and spread the word.

Zoom log in: ID 7917024931

Password: chelmsford 🐝

# The Healthy Brood Box: Asian Hornet

By Katy Langley and Salma Attan, Essex Bee Health Officers

When the daytime temperature reaches 12-15°C consistently for 5 or 6 days mated foundress Asian Hornet (AH) Queens will emerge from hibernation and find a sheltered location to make a primary nest. This is usually in a shed, outbuilding, under house eaves, shrub, hedge or occasionally in the ground. The nest is made from chewed wood pulp and takes a while to establish since the Queen is working alone. It takes several weeks from the start of the nest for the first adults to emerge. If the nest is disturbed she will abscond and start again. The enormous energy expended on this makes it worthwhile for Queens to fight for possession of a nest. Several vanquished Queens are often found littering the ground below a nest. The Queen lays one egg per day and the nest is rarely larger than a tennis ball. Incubation is slower when temperatures are low and a single Queen cannot generate much warmth but she will sleep curled round the eggs. The larvae develop slowly until there are sufficient numbers of adults to feed them and elevate nest temperature. Like wasps the larvae are fed protein by adult workers and 'reward' the worker with a sugary secretion. Once a hundred or so adults have emerged a secondary nest is established nearby, usually higher up in a tree. However, sometimes the primary nest is expanded rather than a secondary nest established or it may be established near to the ground. In France half the nests found have been less than 5m from the ground.

AH usually forage within 600m from the nest with a usual maximum range of 900m. Hornet stings are 6mm long and the official NBU stance is that a hornet sting is about as painful as a wasp sting but hornet stings are not barbed, so a single hornet can sting multiple times. If a nest is disturbed ie you approach between 5-7m, the hornets will defend it. AH have a fearsome reputation for aggressive behaviour in Asia but the European strain is currently from one foundress and appears less aggressive so far.

In France AH start to appear in apiaries in July and August but

numbers increase as summer progresses and the enlarging larvae population need sustenance. In summer hornets live for around 30 days. Between September and November sexually mature adults (gynes) leave the nest and mate. In an average nest of 1,200 workers 200 Queens and 400 drones are produced. They mate near or within the nest and like bees, males die after mating. Unmated adults will be attracted to nectar and sweet foods to sustain them, particularly ivy, polygonium and other plants which attract wasps and European Hornet. As the weather gets colder the unmated adults die. There is no consensus on whether only mated Queens hibernate. Unmated Queens could found a nest of drones only. Of the mature Queens 95% do not survive hibernation (but we don't know if they are all mated). More will be eliminated during territorial combat. However, the sheer number of Queens produced causes an exponential increase in nests. There is no consensus on the flight range of AH for dispersal but 50-60 km appears possible.

30 to 50% of the AH diet is bees, the remainder consists of other flying insects, aphids and scavenged protein, often from human activities (discarded take-away food, fishing waste, open bins). Asian Hornets rarely invade hives (unless the colony is very weak) and reduction in entrance size to 5.5 or 6mm prevents them gaining access. However honey bees 'close down' the hive if three or four hawking hornets are present and may starve since they will not leave to forage.



Check your single flowering camellias for Asian Hornets: at this time of year they provide a useful source of nectar for Queens. Investigate your sheds and garages for primary nests. Contact [APHA](#) if you spot Asian Hornet. Download the AH watch App for

[iPhone](#) or [Android](#). Register your hives on BeeBase to get up to date information on Pests and Disease in your area. Download [AH ID posters here](#). 🐝

## Divisional Round-up

### Chelmsford

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Chelmsford have continued their Zoom replacement monthly member meetings. Their December seasonal meeting saw their members split into teams, answering general knowledge questions and completing tasks which contributed points to their team.

### Saffron Walden

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The division have continued their Zoom meetings in November and December and are preparing events for the coming year, in particular an education programme. Members were canvassed on their suggestions for topics, which will inform their final programme.

### Epping Forest

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As an alternative for their cancelled Honey Show, the division ran a photographic competition, which resulted in over 100 entries, with the best entries turned into a professionally printed calendar.

Eric Beaumont has stood down as Chair with Salma Attan being voted in as Chair, and Don McHale has stood down as DVM, with Simon Nicholson voted in as DVM.

### Exam secretary report

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Six candidates were due to take the Module exam in March 2020, and all were deferred to 2021. Four candidates took up the offer of taking the online exam on the 24th April, with the remaining candidates hopefully having the opportunity to take the written exam in the Autumn. There will be a practice session for candidates on the 20th & 21st March (note the first date conflicts with the EBKA AGM). Marin Anastasov has written an article in the January 2021 edition of the BBKA NEWS about taking the new exam. 🐝

# Update from the CEC Chair

Jane Ridler

**A** slightly belated Happy New Year! Not such an auspicious start of course, but hopefully things will improve.

We had 2 significant agenda items at the CEC January meeting, which I need to share with you all. Add on to that, the EGM for all members, which was held earlier in the evening, and ratified all the Rule changes proposed in last month's Essex Beekeeper, made for a busy evening's work! The propositions were passed by all 21 members attending the EGM.

The first is that the updating of the Trustees' Handbook is complete and uploaded onto the EBKA website. It is a comprehensive guide to all procedures and roles in the CEC and expands the Rules for day-to-day use by the trustees. It's also very useful for Divisional committees. It has been uploaded along with the Rules and all the current Policies - a complete opus! The link is <https://ebka.org/members-area/ebka-rules-policies>. Please do take a look for any information you might need. It reflects a huge amount of work, carried out by trustees, former trustees, and the Governance sub-committee. Most of the CEC have contributed to the Trustee Handbook, but I'd like to thank in particular Vanessa Wilkinson, as co-ordinator of the THB, Ted Grad, Paul Wiltshire, others also from the Governance sub-committee who have contributed to the policy documents and Nick Holmes for the technology.

Second, the decision by the trustees on the conversion to CIO status for the EBKA was made. Much work on the project has been carried out since the motion was passed at the last AGM to further the project, but I'll start with a little background...

The introduction of Charitable Incorporated Organisations as a new legal category was made in 2013. It was at first thought to be an obvious step for EBKA. A little reflecting, and it is apparent that all charities are not the same! Further research by the trustees showed us that the type of charity which gains the most benefit



from being CIO is the larger organisation with higher risks. They have employees, who have rights; significant assets, like buildings, which carry fire and burglary risks; they may need the power to borrow money or take out mortgages; and have the risks attending the raising of large funds for their charitable works. BBKA has employees and property. The local choral society for which I was secretary until recently takes on the significant financial risk of making contracts with professional musicians and smart concert halls to the cost of many thousands of pounds, without any guarantee of ticket sales. Both these charities are now CIOs.

After the proposal to forward the application for conversion, the trustees scrutinised the document and decided that there were significant issues over the powers that would be afforded to the EBKA, particularly through the trustees, and the fact that the current rules on our protocol would be changed. Hence the decision was made to step back and reconsider. This culminated in early December with a consultation meeting with a charity lawyer, also an EBKA member. The Association owes a huge vote of thanks to John Rhodes for his balanced view and support of the trustees in their deliberations. He first asked us what risks EBKA takes and then answered all the questions raised from our own research.

Subsequently, at the January CEC meeting, the trustees have voted to discontinue the progress of the conversion, unless or until the balance of the argument changes, and to present this to the members at the upcoming AGM. This was agreed unanimously by the trustees and there was no counter argument amongst the views put from any of the non-voting CEC members. This does not mean that at some time in the future, the balance won't change to favour conversion. If you are interested in the details of the reasoning, I have outlined them at the end of this article.

In summary, the level of risk undertaken by EBKA and the modest benefits that CIO status confers to an association like ours, where there are no employees, no external fund-raising and no property ownership, were not considered enough to outweigh the costs, considerable work (by our limited workforce) and difficulties of

converting our complicated 9 Division structure. Some important areas for future work have arisen from all the research, so the project has been useful. It has raised issues of personal indemnity insurance for all members, but especially the trustees, rule changes that need considering and scrutiny of divisional apiary leases. The trustees feel that their time, given voluntarily, would be much better spent in dealing with these and other issues.

Regards & Stay Safe

Jane Ridler

Chair, CEC EBKA

If you are interested in the details, here are some of the salient points made to support the decision agreed by the trustees to remain an Unincorporated Association:-

- We are an Association which exists as a charity with obligations to the general public and we are very pleased to carry these out. But our first function is to support our members and we are funded by our members. We do not have employees, own buildings, need mortgages or other borrowing requirements, or raise funds apart from membership fees. We don't need the benefits that being a CIO would give us on these counts. Because a CIO is a legal entity, the trustees in that case would not be personally at risk from legal action in respect of contracts or other commitment as trustees. Suitable personal indemnity insurance can also protect trustees against most of these risks. In both cases, trustees remain potentially liable for any criminal or seriously negligent behaviour.
- We consist of 9 devolved Divisions. Each has a trustee representative, who also indeed mainly, has responsibility to the EBKA. We have 12 bank accounts which would each have to be closed and reopened. This devolved structure would cause complications in the formulation of the CIO constitution and its subsequent administration. Most other BKAs and the BBKA have a single governance structure, with trustees appointed



specifically to fulfil different roles.

- All the lease contracts agreed by the divisions with various other parties, including local councils, would need to be redrawn and may well create difficulties and increased cost (both in redrawing the agreements and possible raised rental).
- We have great difficulty in getting volunteers to take on roles at the CEC and carry out all the work already needed by the Association. Conversion would create an extra burden at divisional level and co-ordination of this for the CEC. In addition, there would be the drafting of an acceptable application for a new CIO constitution to the Charity Commission which would generate many meetings for both the CIO sub-committee and the CEC.
- We have a structure which has worked well for EBKA for over 20 years and there would be no easy reversal if we found we wanted to do this.
- There would inevitably be significant costs involved.

**Articles appearing in The Essex Beekeeper are not necessarily the views  
either of the Editor or the Essex Beekeepers' Association**

To ensure inclusion within the diary of county-wide events would divisions  
provide the editor with details of local meetings by the 4th of the previous  
month.

Robert Silver – [robert.silver@outlook.com](mailto:robert.silver@outlook.com)

## Meetings in February 2021

Members are more than welcome to attend another Division's Zoom meeting. Just contact the Division and talk to the relevant co-ordinator.

Please note that all of these meetings are subject to Government COVID-19 rules that may be in place. Please check with the Division, too, to ensure that the event is running.

## February 2021

**04** | **20:00 – 22:00 - tbc, Harlow Division**

*Address: tba*

**04** | **20:00 - Swarming - oops my bees have swarmed. Buckfast speakers, Romford Division**

*Zoom meeting*

**16** | **19:30 - 21:00 - Monthly Meeting - Swarming and use of Nucs, Chelmsford Division**

*Address: Margaretting Village Hall, Wantz Rd, Margaretting, Ingatestone CM4 0EP*

**24** | **19:30 – 21:30 - tbc, Southend Division**

*Address: tba*

## March 2021

**04** | **20:00 – 22:00 - tbc, Harlow Division**

*Address: tba*

**04** | **20:00 - tba, Romford Division**

*Address: tbc*

**16** | **20:00 - 21:30 - Cooking with Honey, Chelmsford Division**

*Zoom meeting*

**24** | **19:30 – 21:30 - tbc, Southend Division**

*Address: tba*

**26** | **19:30- 'We'll meet again'. Post-covid social gathering with buffet (Covid rules permitting). Or a Zoom special, Braintree Division**

*Address: White Notley Village Hall*

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